PS ONE AND PS2 TRICKS & STRATEGIES | Star Wars: Starfighter • Fear Effect 2 • ATV Offroad Fury • plus DVD Easter Eggs

ZIFF DAVIS

June 2001
ISSUE 45

OFFICIAL U.S. PlayStation MAGAZINE

The First Must-Buy PS2 RPG!

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine Issue 45 (June 2001)

Final Fantasy X Screens

Hill 2 The Scariest Game Ever

INSIDE:
- Gran Turismo 3 A-spec
- Half-Life: Decay
- The Getaway
- Ico
- Spider-Man 2
- Madden NFL 2002
- Star Trek Voyager: Elite Force
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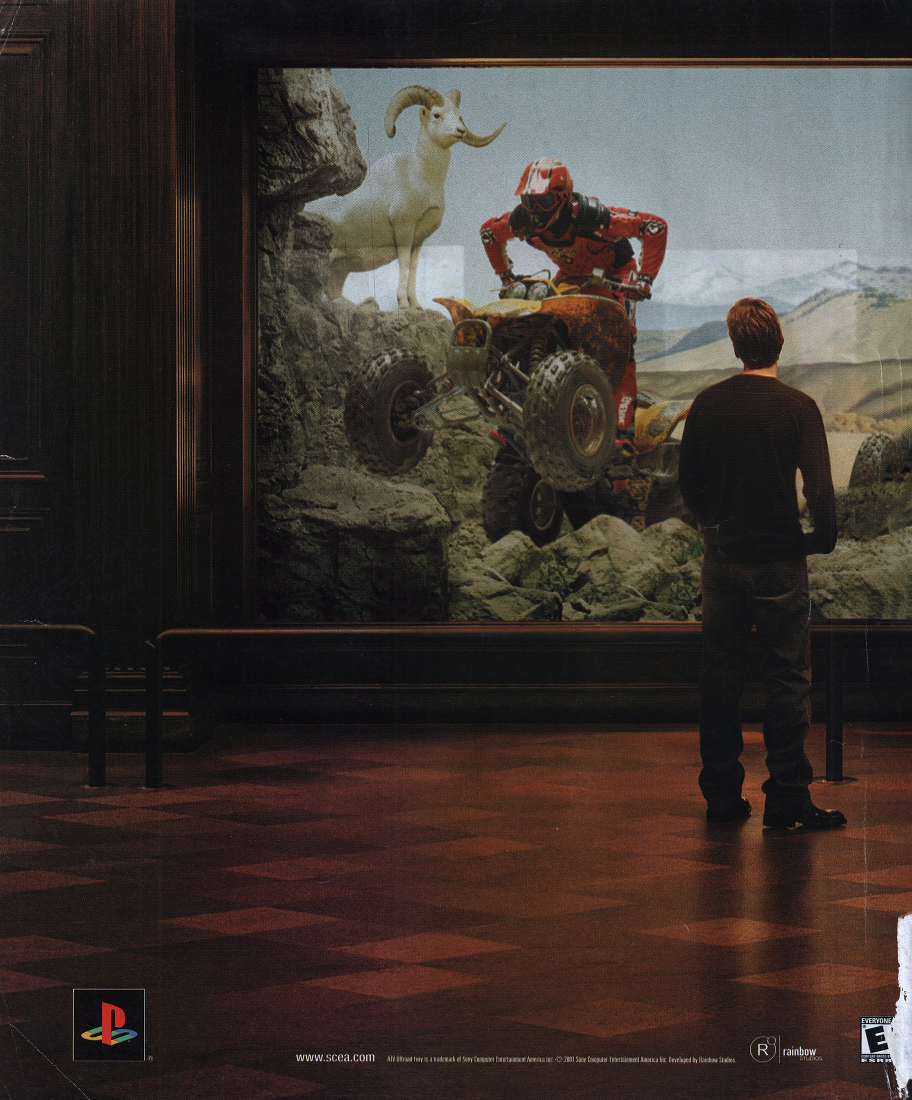
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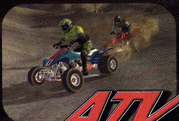

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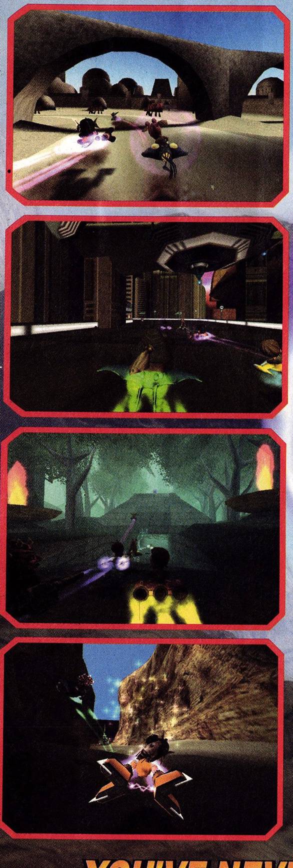

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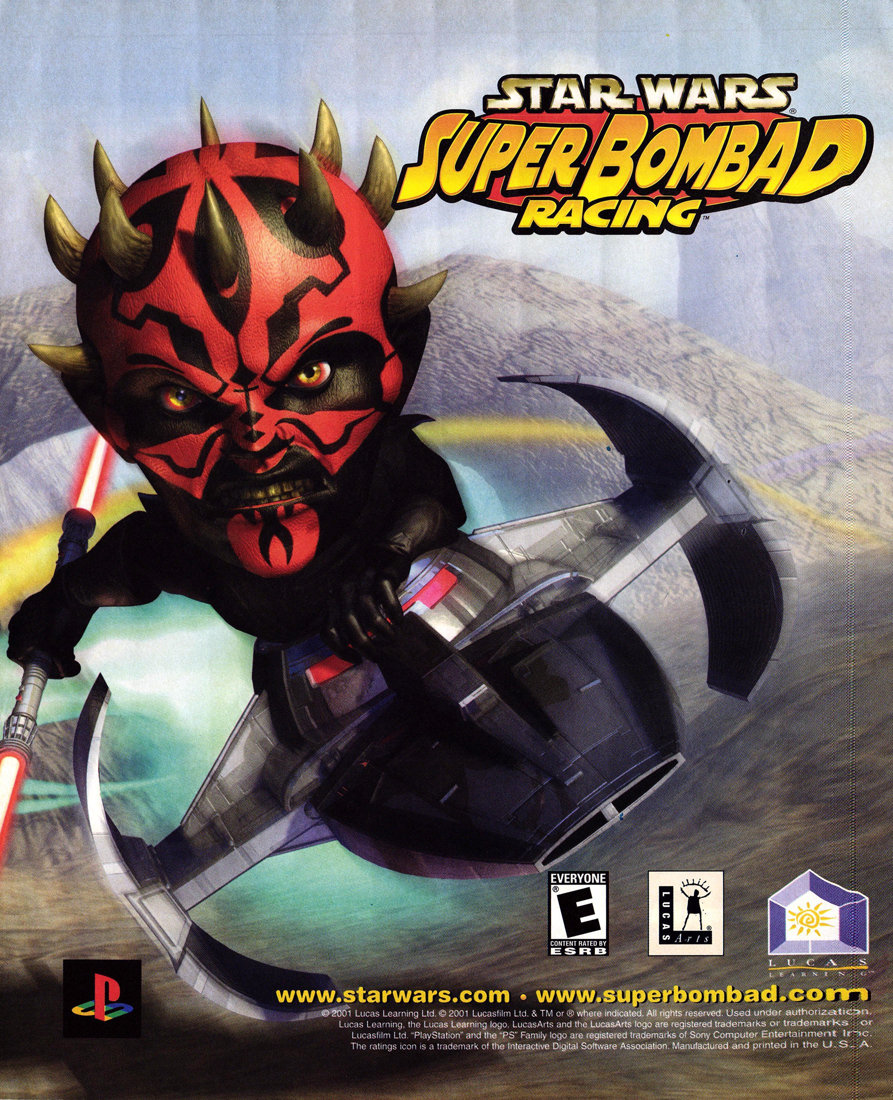
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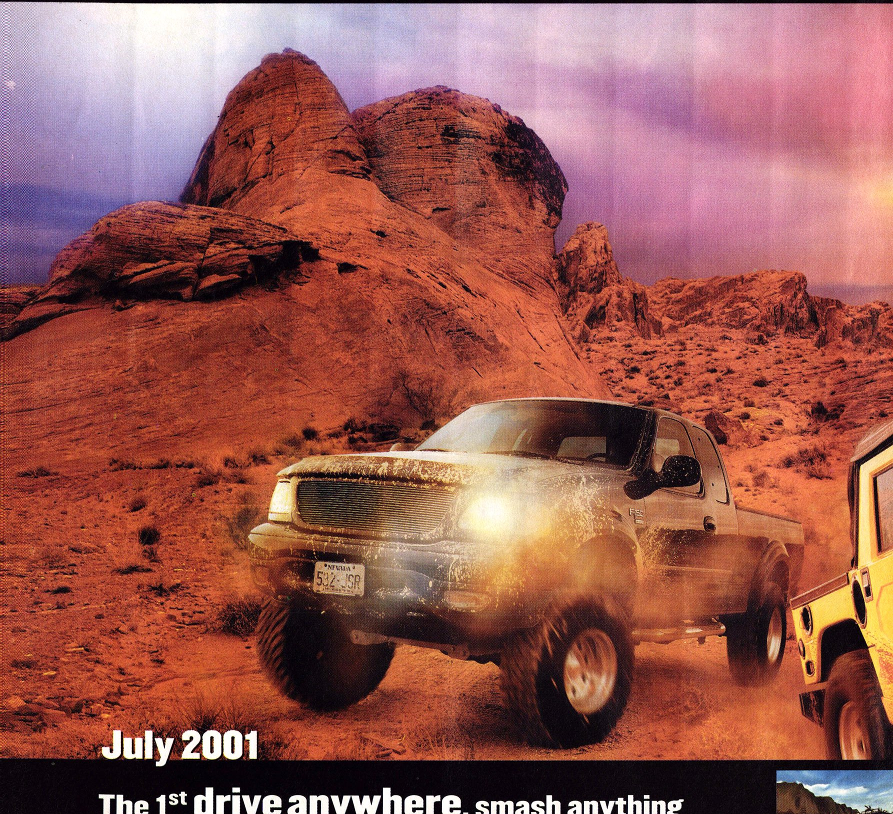

July 2001

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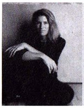

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Alicia integrates traditional media with found objects and photographic images to create rich, deeply textured illustrations. The vast world of Dark Cloud is her second cover for us. www.aliciabuelow.com

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They make us laugh. Hopefully they make you laugh too. Check out their Web site and consider plopping down the cash for their forthcoming book. It's about gaming, and it's funny. www.penny-arcade.com

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Mitch's career was launched when he turned down his dad's generous offer to take over the family dental practice. But Mitch didn't completely turn his back on the teeth. It's his favorite medium. www.mitchgreenblatt.com

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Silent Hill 2
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INSIDE:
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Spider-Man 2
Madden NFL 2002
Star Trek Voyager: Elite Force
Final Fantasy Chronicles
Beat the
Metal Gear Solid 2
Demo in Record Time
BUYING PS2 GAMES ONLINE: WHO DELIVERS THE GOODS

DARK CLOUD • 86

The first real RPG for the PS2 may also be one of the best of its kind ever. With stunning visuals, an ambitious mix of gameplay ideas and an immersive story, Dark Cloud has a lot to offer. Plus, it's 30 percent bigger (find out what we mean by reading our in-depth feature).

FINAL FANTASY X • 60

Up until recently, FFX news has come as a steady—if slight—trickle. Now, Squaresoft is beginning to open the floodgates, and we're first in line. This month we deliver 17 exclusive screens of this staggeringly beautiful game.

PLACE ORDER

ONLINE BUYING GUIDE • 54

The Internet is broken, and it's all your fault (OK, maybe not broken, but certainly creaking in a most uncomfortable fashion). We take a look at the process of shopping for games in the new online environment.

INSIDE THE METAL GEAR SOLID 2 DEMO • 112

We know why you all bought Z.O.E. Don't be ashamed to admit it. In fact, we're going to fuel your secret passion with an in-depth strategy for the MGS2 demo. But don't forget about that other game in there—it rocks!

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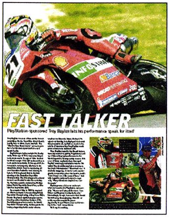

FAST TALKER

PlayStation-sponsored Troy Bayliss lets his performance speak for itself

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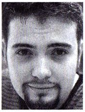
You've read all about Dark Cloud in our feature—now see it in action!

Input • 20
Let us know your thoughts. Write us at our usual address, or send us e-mail at **OPM@ziffdavis.com**.

Spin • 26
We've got Spin oozing out of our ears. Seriously oozing. It's gross. Anyway, this month features Tokyo Game Show coverage, a sit-down with the ultra-hip Funkmaster Flex, an online buying guide, an in-depth profile of Konami's Silent Hill 2, a look inside the industry from a voice actor's point of view, the return of our tribute to the truly hardcore, and much more.

Top Secrets • 108
We start off with Star Wars: Starfighter this month, follow up with the MGS2 demo, and add more.

P.S. • 121
Irreverent, silly, amusing stuff from the world of PlayStation.



John Davison
Editor in Chief

It's always good to get a nice surprise,

and I don't think we've had one quite as pleasant as Dark Cloud for a long while. Although it was originally shown way back when the PS2 was first announced in Japan, it seemed to disappear off the radar and never really blipped back onto it. The Japanese release came and went, and it didn't do particularly well despite all that early excitement. Now that the U.S. release is upon us, though, things seem to have changed quite considerably. Cool stuff has been added to the game, it's been expertly translated, and the result is what seems to be the most lovingly crafted and genuinely different role-playing experience we've seen for some time. With Final Fantasy X still at least six months away, it's about time we had something sizeable to sink our teeth into. Previous RPG efforts on the system just didn't cut it, but Dark Cloud really seems to have what it takes. It should be in stores any day now, but if you need some convincing, check out Gary's exhaustive feature, and then pop the cover CD into your system and watch the video we have for you this month. I think you'll agree that it looks pretty special.

Video Games Have Ratings, Just Like Movies

The Entertainment Software Rating Board provides information about video game content. ESRB ratings are intended as guidelines only; parents should still monitor minors' purchases.

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TEEN RATING
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MATURE RATING
These Games Contain More Adult Themes, Such As Blood And Gore, Stronger Language And Sexual Themes. Deemed Not Suitable For Those Under 17.

ADULTS ONLY RATING
The Extreme Of The Ratings, Suitable For Adults Only. Packs Sexual Themes And Extreme Violence. Console Manufacturers Have Yet To Allow An AO-Rated Game.

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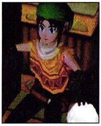


DARK CLOUD **RATING PENDING**
If we slap a game on our cover, you better believe it's good. How good? Well, this month you get to see for yourself. Dark Cloud has wowed us all this month with stunning visuals, a captivating world-creation system and Zelda-esque battles. It all adds up to some great things for RPG fans. Go ahead, see for yourself!

ALADDIN IN NASIRA'S REVENGE **EVERYONE**
Disney just keeps throwing Aladdin lures into the gaming ocean, but who's biting? It's a 3D platformer and let's just say that it's not the most easy to control game on the store shelves. Check out our review, then take a peek at our video of the game. Beware, though: Chances are you'll discover what we already know.

KLONOA **EVERYONE**
Want to play one of the most underrated PS one games ever made? Here's your chance. Klonoa is a colorful platformer with fantastic level design, beautiful music and a lighthearted story. If you like it as much as we do, know that it's a difficult game to find in stores.

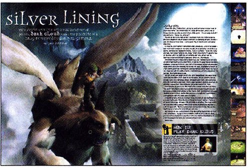
GRIND SESSION **EVERYONE**
When GS first came out, everyone thought it was a bad Tony Hawk's Pro Skater ripoff. Well, it is and it isn't. It's sort of like Tony Hawk 1.5. You skate, flip, lipskid, get up, skate and flip again. Sounds monotonous, but then again, do post-720-Stalefish-to-stunning-lipskids ever get old?

HOT SHOTS GOLF 2 **EVERYONE**
You can't compete with Tiger Woods. So come in from the back deck, quit breaking the neighbors' windows, and try your swing at Hot Shots Golf 2. This game is everything wannabe golfers need. And maybe it'll cure that obsessive need to spill ill-timed *Caddyshack* quotes, too.

DINO CRISIS **MATURE**
If you didn't get to play the original, then you missed out on a challenging adventure that pitted you against a never-ending series of zombies. Er, we mean dinosaurs. Sure it's just like Resident Evil, but Resident Evil is a blast. And so is this game. Play it. Love it. We did.

Next month's demos: Alone in the Dark: The New Nightmare, Dave Mirra BMX Remix, Gran Turismo 3 Preview and more!

SPECIAL FEATURES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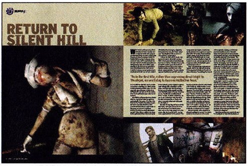
DARK CLOUD • 86

The hype has been swirling around Dark Cloud since the PS2 was first unveiled, and yet the game remained hidden in a fog of mystery. We go hands-on with Sony's innovative and ambitious "Georama" game, and give you all the info you need to understand just how Dark Cloud works. Find out why the first real PS2 RPG may also be one of the most intriguing games ever.

WE GOT THE FUNK

FUNKMASTER FLEX • 42

MTV's Music Generator might be the most innovative game ever released for the PS one. Now, with the PS2 version right around the corner we had a prime reason to catch up with the country's hottest deejay, and MTVMG2 coverboy, Funkmaster Flex. Find out what he said about mixing, what success means, and why he'd do an ad for Burger King.


RETURN TO SILENT HILL

SILENT HILL • 36

Konami's terrifying follow-up to its creepy survival-horror thriller looks even more demented than the first. We get inside the minds of its creators with a one-on-one interview, plus we show enough disturbing new screens to make even the most stalwart adventurer quiver with fear. We're almost dreading this one's release—we don't like having to sleep with the light on.

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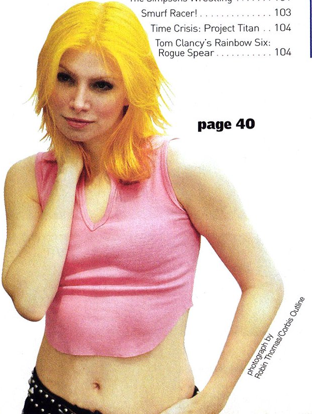
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photograph by Robin Thomas/Corbis Outline

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Animated Violence

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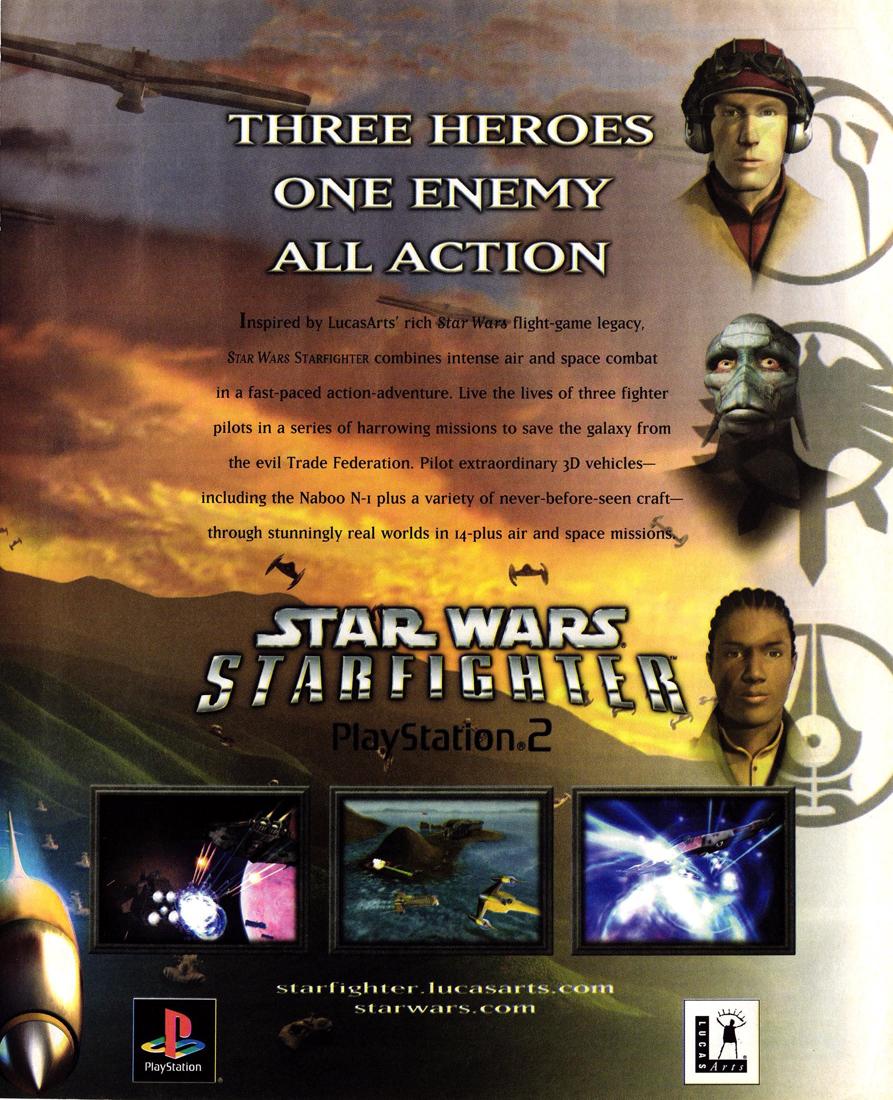

THREE HEROES
ONE ENEMY
ALL ACTION

Inspired by LucasArts' rich *Star Wars* flight-game legacy, STAR WARS STARFIGHTER combines intense air and space combat in a fast-paced action-adventure. Live the lives of three fighter pilots in a series of harrowing missions to save the galaxy from the evil Trade Federation. Pilot extraordinary 3D vehicles—including the Naboo N-1 plus a variety of never-before-seen craft—through stunningly real worlds in 14-plus air and space missions.

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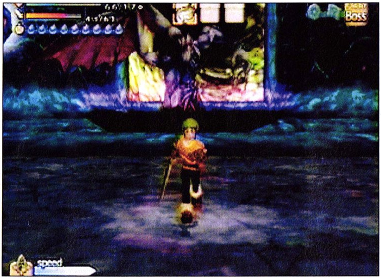
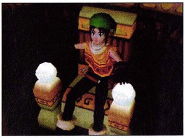
PlayStation®2

starfighter.lucasarts.com
starwars.com

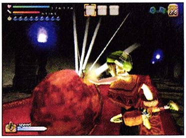




DARK CLOUD

Overshadowed by the flashier and better-known Tekken Tag Tournament and Ridge Racer V, the fellow first-generation title and Sony-produced RPG Dark Cloud seems to have fallen out of the consciousness of most of the gaming community. That changes this month, as *OPM* brings you an in-depth feature and demo movie of the game.

Dark Cloud debuted along with the aforementioned Namco titles in what was the world's first glimpse of actual PlayStation 2 games. The fact that Sony was producing the game took a back seat to the actual advertised features of Dark Cloud: a Zelda-esque battle system, impressive visuals and a world-creation system—which will undoubtedly serve as one of the game's strong selling points. Check out the movie on the disc to see for yourself. And for a much more detailed rundown of Dark Cloud, turn to page 86. Then watch the movie once more for good measure.

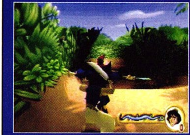


If there's one thing the PS2 can do well, it's lighting effects.

RATING PENDING RP CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

PUBLISHER: SONY CEA • **DEVELOPER:** LEVEL-5 • **AVAILABLE:** JUNE • **PLAYERS:** 1 • **GENRE:** RPG

ALADDIN IN NASIRA'S REVENGE



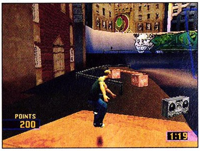
For a film released way back in 1992, Disney has got a lot of mileage out of the Aladdin name: a couple of direct-to-video sequels, an animated series—and now Disney Interactive's first PlayStation outing, which will evoke fond memories of the beloved Aladdin game for the 16-bit consoles. It's a 3D platformer this time, though, and we all know how 3D platformers with popular movie licenses usually end up. The video looks snazzy, but how, you ask, does it play? Well, you certainly don't have to wait long on a final verdict. We reviewed Aladdin in this month's issue, and we weren't all that impressed...

EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

PUBLISHER: SONY CEA • **DEVELOPER:** ARGONAUT • **AVAILABLE:** NOW • **PLAYERS:** 1 • **GENRE:** ACTION

Grind Session

PUBLISHER: SONY CEA • **DEVELOPER:** SHABA GAMES • **AVAILABLE:** NOW • **PLAYERS:** 1-4 • **GENRE:** X-SPORTS



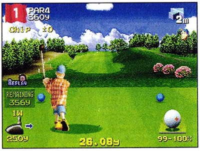
By all accounts, the demo disc editor should be the greatest Grind Session player in the world. He's certainly had enough chances to practice, but he still manages to biff hard on those random bulldozers, a shortcoming that has now somehow transferred to real-life walking. They may not look very fast, but what they lack in speed they make up for in stealth. Back to the game: Skate well for points! Flip, grab and grind! Radical!

EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

△	RAIL TRICKS	L1	SPIN LEFT
□	FLIP TRICKS	L2	FREE LOOK
○	GRAB TRICKS	R1	SPIN RIGHT
✕	JUMP	R2	REVEAL BONUSES

Hot Shots Golf 2

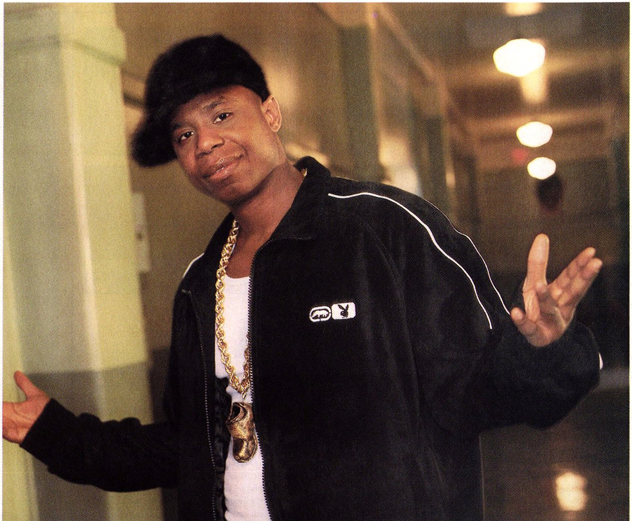
PUBLISHER: SONY CEA • **DEVELOPER:** CAMELOT • **AVAILABLE:** NOW • **PLAYERS:** 1-4 • **GENRE:** SPORTS



A fellow wiser than most of us (Mark Twain, if you must know) once said that golf is a great way to ruin a good walk. That's the beauty of Hot Shots Golf 2—all the good parts of golf without the hassles of lightning attacks, alligators or drunken spectators. Well, the drunken spectators can still be mustered up, but that's entirely up to you. The beauty of Hot Shots Golf is that it provides a fairly realistic golfing game while still retaining the fun of a more arcadey title. Don't get us wrong—frustration isn't completely eliminated by Hot Shots Golf 2. But at the end of the day it's much easier on the wallet to replace a broken PlayStation controller than a graphite driver.

EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

△	CAMERA FORWARD	L1	SELECT CLUB
□	POWER/APPROACH	L2	TOGGLE VIEW
○	CAMERA BACKWARD	R1	SELECT CLUB
✕	SWING CONTROL	R2	CAMERA DEFAULT



Doug E. Fresh
Wearing the Beret
Circa 1986

MARC ECKŌFOOTWEAR
eckō.com

White

Gold *not available

Blue

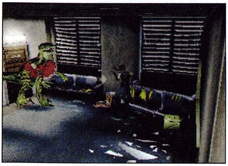
Black

ECKŌ.COMPLEX ECKŌ FUNCTION ECKŌ RED MARC ECKŌ FOOTWEAR / GLOVES BAGS SWIMWEAR LEATHER

Wearing the Playboy Lounge Jacket and Pant
Created by Hugh Hefner, crafted by Marc Eckō

DINO CRISIS

When Dino Crisis was first announced in 1999, cries of "it's Resident Evil with dinosaurs!" echoed throughout the land. When it was released later that year, the gaming world found out what Dino Crisis was really all about: Resident Evil with dinosaurs. Not that it was a bad thing—who could really blame Capcom for sticking with a proven winning formula? Gameplay hint of the month: The dinosaurs want to kill you. You should kill them first.



MATURE
M
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

△	RUN/CANCEL	L1	NOT USED
□	RUN	L2	NOT USED
○	MENU	R1	READY WEAPON
✕	USE WEAPON/CHECK	R2	NOT USED

Next Month's Demo Disc

Playables:
Alone in the Dark, Dave Mirra BMX Remix, Gran Turismo 2, Aladdin in Nasira's Revenge, Tomb Raider 2, Tomb Raider 3, Tomb Raider 4

PS2 Video Previews:
Gran Turismo 3, Winback, Super Bombad Racing, Gauntlet Dark Legacy

KLONOA

Our featured classic PlayStation demo this month is high on the list of the most underrated and unappreciated PS one games ever. A bright and colorful platformer, Namco's Klonoa is definitely an unsung treasure. Fresh and innovative level design, a lighthearted plot with a sinister undertone, and wonderfully composed music tracks were but a few highlights—and playing it again reminds us of the great anticipation we have for the forthcoming PS2 sequel. Along with whetting your appetite for Klonoa 2, we bring you the Klonoa demo this month so that you can experience what so many have missed. (If you can find the original in stores, consider yourself lucky.)

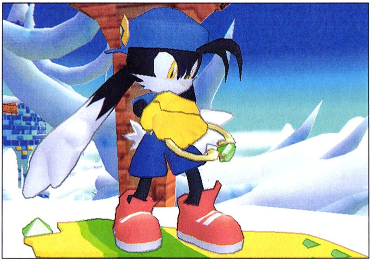
Once you're in close enough range to an enemy, tap the shoot button (Circle or Square) to pick him up. Tap the shoot button again while standing to throw him like a weapon, or tap it while jumping to get an extra height boost (you'll have to do this to get past certain areas or collect hard-to-reach items).

The first boss isn't much of a challenge. Just make sure you get the timing down for his jumps, and pelt him with a hapless enemy as soon as his back is exposed.

EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

△	JUMP	L1	NOT USED
□	SHOOT	L2	NOT USED
○	SHOOT	R1	NOT USED
✕	JUMP	R2	NOT USED

PUBLISHER: NAMCO • **DEVELOPER:** NAMCO • **AVAILABLE:** NOW • **PLAYERS:** 1 • **GENRE:** ACTION



Klonoa 2 combines the classic gameplay of its predecessor with gorgeous next-gen cel-shaded graphics. Can you see why we're so excited about this one?!

DISC PROBLEMS?

Did you buy a copy of our magazine that did not contain a demo CD? Simply send the receipt in an envelope marked "OPM Replacement Disc" to the address below with the name and address of the store plus your phone number and address and we'll send you the disc. Make sure you specify which month the corresponding disc belongs to in order to ensure you get the right one.

Also, if you have a malfunctioning or non-working demo disc, call SCEA at 1-800-345-SONY. They will provide instructions to obtain repair or replacement services.

Sony Computer Entertainment America (SCEA) warrants to the original purchaser of the Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine that the demo disc included is free from defects in material and workmanship for a period of ninety (90) days from the date of purchase. SCEA agrees for a period of ninety (90) days to either repair or replace, at its option, the SCEA product. You must call 1-800-345-SONY to receive instructions to obtain repair/replacement services.

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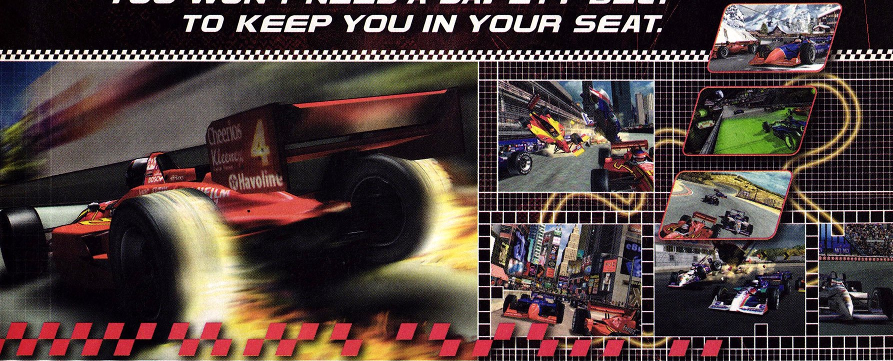

- 250-mph asphalt-scorching action, plus "On-Fire" turbo boost.
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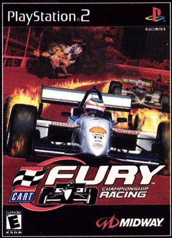
CART FURY CHAMPIONSHIP RACING



PlayStation 2

EVERYONE E Violence

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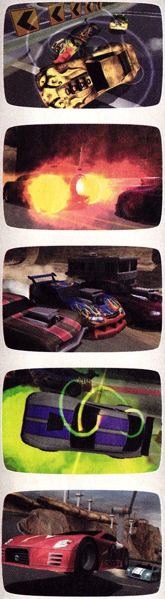
EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Comic Mischief
Mild Language

PlayStation 2



15 TRACKS. 108 CARS. AND TOP SPEEDS IN EXCESS OF 190 MPH. THAT WASN'T YOUR LIFE THAT FLASHED BEFORE YOUR EYES, IT WAS A MADMAN IN A ROCKET SLED STEALING FIRST PLACE.

LEAD THUMB?

Darwin's
AutoBody

● Over-active adrenal gland? Weak or non-existent braking instinct? Problems controlling acceleration? You may be a Speed Freak. If so, Rumble Racing is the game for you. Tear through fantasy worlds sniffing out short cuts and power-ups at the speed of light. Trigger asphalt-melting nitro boosts with big-air barrel rolls and corkscrew flips. Because in this turbo-charged race, if you're not lightning fast, you're already finished.

RUMBLE RACING

EA GAMES

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PlayStation
CRAZY TAXI
SPY HUNTER
Medal of Honor FRONTLINE

Letter of the month

Sweet but Short

I have discovered a pattern. It's one that I'm not particularly proud of discovering, but it just seemed very obvious to me.

Lately, all these great games have been coming out (Onimusha, Zone of the Enders). They all have two obvious things in common: They all received a lot of hype, and they were all incredible games. However, they also had one bad thing in common: They were all short. Which brings me to my discovery. Every single much-hyped PS2 game that's come out has been disappointingly short. Onimusha was truly remarkable, but it ended too soon. My biggest disappointment was with Z.O.E., which I felt was going to be one of the greatest games ever created—and it was, until it ended so soon.

The point I'm trying to make is, I don't feel I'm getting my money's worth, plunking down $50 a game and then beating it within a day. Obviously, all these games have a lot of quality, but not much quantity. Sure, one can argue quality over quantity, but quality can only last so much. Developers are not giving us gamers the balance we need. No one likes an extremely long and boring game, but at the same time no one likes great games that end so soon. I shudder at the thought that Metal Gear Solid 2 could possibly suffer the same fate. Everyone who's played the demo has to admit that they were addicted to the thing for hours on end. But what if the actual game doesn't satisfy our addiction?

Jimmy Lin
jimbo_akimbo@msn.com

This is something that we've noticed a lot lately when reviewing new games, and it does seem to be a worrying trend. Both Z.O.E. and Star Wars Starfighter suffered from what seemed like premature finales, and both were games that really could've used an extra few hours of gameplay. From what we've seen and heard so far, we're expecting MGS2 to clock in at around 15 or 20 hours. However, this will doubtless be the duration of the game if you sit and watch all of the cinemas, just like in the original. Some folks derided Metal Gear Solid, because you could clear through the gameplay chunks in just a few hours.

As games become more visually spectacular, a big part of the experience seems to be the passive element: the storytelling. But it's not the case with all games. Dark Cloud looks to be a very lengthy experience, Gran Turismo 3 will eat up large portions of your life, and of course this fall you can look forward to Final Fantasy X as well.

Think you have what it takes to write the Letter of the Month? Send us your video game expositions and you could win the official *OPM* Box of Joy. We pack our Box of Joy with an assortment of nifty goodies from all your favorite software companies.

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Aggressive and Upsetting

I have noticed lately that many of your articles and features are aggressive and upsetting to many game publishers, developers and meeker readers alike. Keep up the good work.

R.J. White
jenovaschild@yahoo.com

Yeah? Thanks. Creep.

Fabled Issue 17 Nonsense

I just read the May 2001 issue of *OPM* and was quite intrigued when I heard about the "fabled" issue 17. I myself have played Final Fantasy VII many a time and am tired of building up Aeris, then losing her. If there is a code to revive or keep Aeris, I would be very grateful if you would send it to me or post it in the next issue.

Joseph Christman
Nitecrawler752@aol.com

I have a copy of demo 17, and I was reading in issue 44 that the disc had a game called Thrill Kill and a Resident Evil 1.5 demo in it too. Well, I can't find ether; all I see is ODT, Oddworld, etc....How do I get to them, or are they even on there?

Bobby Detrick.
bbby777@juno.com

Could you send me the Tomb Raider nude codes via e-mail?

Jacob Grimm
Jacob_Grimm@ZeldaHeaven.zzn.com

Hey, I am so mad about you being sold out of issue 17. I was wondering if you could just make the demo disc, because I heard it was so great.

David Barnett
Sport23DB@aol.com

I got my *OPM* magazine six minutes ago, and madly searched for the April Fool's joke. I just wanted to be one of the first to catch it. The No. 17 issue contained no such things as the "nude code" for Tomb Raider or Thrill Kill or even Resident Evil 1.5. And the whole story about the Aeris code is nothing but hogwash. However, I was in a state of ROFL. Thanks for the laughs.

"Paul G."
paulabe9@hotmail.com

The number of people who believed us about issue 17 was shocking. It wasn't even a concerted effort at an April Fool. We were being sarcastic—something that apparently hundreds of you are unable to grasp the concept of. Those of you who found it funny and laughed, go buy yourselves a lollipop. Well done. The rest of you...here's a little treat. To revive Aeris in FFVII you have to finish the game seven times and collect every object in the game each time. The eighth time you play it, she won't die, and you'll see a new cutscene where she wakes up and kisses Cloud.

Also, we heard from the Webster's people recently that the word "gullible" is being removed from the dictionary later this year. To complain and ensure the reinstatement of this wonderful and important word, please visit www.dictionary.com and voice your concerns.

Someone Make A God Bothering PlayStation Game!

A lot of people think that the Bible will never make it on to PlayStation or any other console at that. But think about it for a second. Why not? Wouldn't it be cool to walk between the Red Sea? Or to have the Philistines fighting the Israelites? If you have a group of people that know what they are doing, they could make an excellent game based on something in the Bible. And here is another bonus: You wouldn't need no strategy guide; just get out the good old Bible and look up what you need to do next. And if someone really wanted to make a thought-provoking game, they could base a game on the book of Revelations. What would be so bad about that?

Sure, you could mock this idea, but come on—there could be some really good games made from the Bible. And one more thing I have to say: The movie of Noah on NBC totally sucked and was totally messed up. One example: THERE WAS NO FREAKIN' MERCHANT!!!

Stephen Loney
stephen_loney@hotmail.com

NO FREAKIN' MERCHANT!!! Oh good gracious, what were they thinking!?! The concept of games based on Biblical tales is an interesting one, but it seems unlikely at the moment that we'll see games based specifically on the Good Book. There are many games out there that "borrow" ideas and subtlely preach similar moralities, but they are often titles designed

for a global market. Because of this, they tackle broader concepts like spirituality, as they are more easily communicated to a range of cultures than Old or New Testament stories.

Problems At The Magic Gate

Is my PS2 8MB Memory Card supposed to save PS one games? Because whenever I put a PS one game into my PS2 (such as Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2), and try to save, it says that there is no memory card detected when the 8MB card is inserted in slot 1. However, PS2 games save fine on my card. What's wrong?

Mike Muenich
muenich2@hotmail.com

We still get a lot of queries about this, so let's clear this up for everyone who's curious. Here goes: Make some notes of this or something. PS one games will only save onto PS one memory cards. PS2 games will only save onto PS2 memory cards. However, you can copy files from a PS one card onto a PS2 card and use this purely as an archive (you won't be able to load them into a game, but you can copy them back onto a PS one card later to use them). We forget from time to time too, and there are occasional "why won't it f$#@ing save?!" outbursts here in the office.

SUV VUE PS ASAP

I was watching a car show this weekend and saw them profile a Saturn VUE—a new SUV-type car. In the back seat of the car, I noticed two PlayStation controllers and an LCD-type screen on the back of each headrest. Was I dreaming, or has PlayStation become a new option on vehicles these days?

Josh Walker
Belleville, IL

You weren't dreaming. There are a number of ways that you can get a PS one hook- up for a car these days. Some are elaborate and built into the center console on an SUV, while others are related to the in-car video setups you can buy. Saturn doesn't mention the option at www.saturn.com, but there are plenty of auto outfitters that could help you out if you seriously want something. Note that something like this would probably cost considerably more than just a PS one with the InterAct LCD screen. It may not be stuffed into the back of a headrest and surrounded in sumptuous leather, but it's fairly cheap, and it works.

We Want a PS2 Disc, We Want a PS2 Disc. We Want, etc., etc.

I just purchased the May 2001 issue of *OPM*, and I am wondering how much longer the demo disc is going to remain as a PS one disc. I think it's time to transition to a demo disc to allow players to try out demos of current or upcoming PS2 releases. I often browse every gaming magazine I can come across, even those published outside of the USA. In particular, U.K. gamers seem to have the upper hand when it comes to magazines packaged with discs. A friend of mine in the U.K. just mentioned that the U.K.'s official PlayStation magazine came packaged with a disc containing a Gran Turismo 3 demo. You can imagine I was extremely jealous! My friend also mentioned that non-official magazines often came packaged with a DVD, which contain non-interactive trailers for upcoming games. I really wish I could be so lucky to see some PS2 trailers on DVD instead of the extremely poor-quality movies I see on the *OPM* demo disc. If you haven't already, please consider moving to the PS2 format.

Thrakkorzog, with a "K"
JBRabig@uop.com

We are currently working with Sony on a solution to this very dilemma, Thrakkorzog. Hopefully, later in the year we'll be able to move to a PS2 disc and blow you back to Dimension 14B with some fantastic demos.
- John, with an "H"

Remotely Universal

Any news on the release date of Sony's official DVD remote for the PlayStation 2? I read somewhere that it'll have additional functions to the ones available currently. Know anything about this, or the likely price? I have contacted Sony in regards to this, but they couldn't give me any answers. I currently own the Saitek remote, which seems to experience problems occasionally with the buttons not functioning.

Simon Harrop
sharrop@bellsouth.net

The "official" remote is a very funky piece of kit indeed, and unlike the other remotes out there, it feels like a "proper" remote, and not a cheap piece of plastic. As you say, SCEA hasn't announced the thing officially, but we have heard rumblings that it's likely to be announced very soon. Maybe sooner.

Bloated, Washed-Up Has-Been

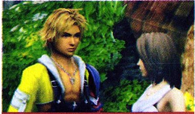
I just read your latest issue and I can't believe what you said of Axl Rose, you called him a "bloated, washed-up has-been." Well, if you would have listened to the Guns n' Roses set at Rio or some of the new songs like "The Blues" or "Madagascar," you would eat your words. They sound better than ever, and Axl sounds like he did back in '87. You have no clue what you are talking about; the Guns n' Roses album is going to be the album of the year, but you wouldn't know what real music is. I bet you listen to bands like N'suck and Backstreet Boys. And I know you won't have the balls to print this reply.

Dave Langelier
Marlboro, MA

It seems that our balls are voluminous and capacious, Dave. While yours are simply boring and whiney. Good day to you, sir.

You Can Buy One Quite Easily Now, We Hear

I am the happiest man alive! I am now one of the few, the proud...the owner of a PlayStation



QUESTION OF THE MOMENT

This month you tell us if you think the Medal of Honor series is in any danger of being diluted. Next month, let us know what you think of the state of RPGs on the PS2. E-mail your thoughts to OPM@ziffdavis.com. Mark your notes RPG.

Everything looks perfect. Its PS2 incarnation will not knock it down, but raise it to the ranks of games such as Metal Gear Solid!

Robert J. Sautter
North Webster, IN

I can't wait for more Medal of Honor...dilution is possible, but not anytime soon.

Jim Morey
SolamnicOne@aol.com

I DON'T think the MOH series is in danger of being diluted.

Matt Burnett
darklonoa@juno.com

Frontline AND a flight sim. Hope they don't go Army Men on us.

George Tanner
Phoenix, AZ

BRITNEY'S CORNER

Britney By the Numbers:

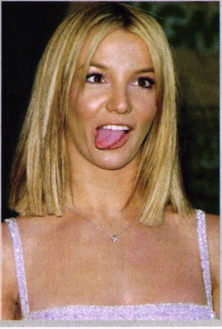
# of readers who yearn for the return of Britney after losing her spot last month to Axl Rose: **83**

# of readers upset by our comment about Axl Rose being a "bloated, washed-up has-been": **3**

# of readers upset by our comment about Axl Rose being a "bloated, washed-up has-been" who have inane e-mail names like "Kurt Cobain" and "Slash Gibson": **2**

# of readers who want us to e-mail them Britney pics: **3**

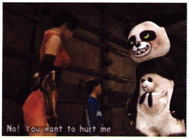
# of readers who requested "someone who not only looks good, but also knows how to sing, like the Dixie Chicks": **1**



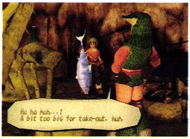
Britney Spears photo by Steve Granitz/WireImage.com

Screen Caption Contest

Every month we run a pic, and it's your job to come up with a witty caption. E-mail your captions to **OPM@ziffdavis.com** and mark the subject **CAPTION CONTEST**. The new picture, from Dark Cloud, should be easy enough.



WINNER!
"Have you ever kissed a baby panda between the ears?"
chipjennings1@msn.com



NEXT MONTH
Think of something that'll make us soil ourselves with laughter and you'll be our next winner.

"Why the f*@k can't I configure the f*&$@#g controller any damn way that I want to?"

2! I was looking at PlayStation games in the electronic section of the local Target when I looked down and saw a PS2!!! I thought I was going to crap myself! It was just sitting there, in plain sight, and mine for the taking. When I went to get my mom, I came back and asked the cashier to open up the case for me. I asked the cashier how long they had had systems in stock, and he told me over a week!!! Then I asked him how they could manage to still have them. He told me that people don't notice, so the systems go unbought. So, to all you unfortunate people who don't have a PlayStation 2 yet, just take a look around. It could be right underneath your nose.

Andy Engebretson
tallgeese_34@hotmail.com

It's a good thing you didn't actually crap yourself. We hear that Target don't take too kindly to spontaneous defecation in their stores. Your note actually brings an interesting trend to light, Andy. People are so used to thinking that the PS2 is a hot item that's impossible to find that even though there's now a steady supply, most folks still assume that they'll never be able to find one. Look online or in stores. They're out there now.

To Yutaka

Yutaka, reading your column ("A Long Hard Year for PS2," May 2001), the answer you're looking for is simple. The general consensus is that people are waiting for the "better" games to come out. Games like Gran Turismo 3, Metal Gear Solid 2 and Virtua Fighter 4. People rushed out to buy the system because it was new. It didn't matter if only one game was released at launch time. It was new and people had to have it. The shortage only seemed to create a greater demand. The fact that it was the first console to come out with a DVD player was the added bonus. Now that several grade-A titles are available, I think most gamers are willing to wait for a game that is going to use the capabilities the system has to offer. Games like Z.O.E. and Onimusha, according to the industry, are only scratching the surface. Until MGS2 comes out, people will continue to buy more DVDs for their PS2 than games.

Michael Tremblay
mtremblay@majilite.com

You really think so? Before then, there's Gran Turismo 3, Dark Cloud and Twisted Metal: Black, to name but three. There are more than just a couple of good games out now, and irrespective of some folks' woes, the PS2 is the most successful console in history, having sold 10 million units worldwide in a third of the time of the original PlayStation. What does everyone think? Are you using the DVD feature much? Or are you really just waiting for Metal Gear Solid 2? Write us and let us know at OPM@ziffdavis.com. Mark your e-mails I'M WAITING FOR SNAKE.

Grand Theft Auto "T"

I read in your article on Grand Theft Auto 3 for PS2 last month that there was some talk about DMA making a Teen-rated version. Any chance of that actually going through? I ask because my mom only lets me have one M-rated game for each of my systems. So I wonder if that will happen with any other games, too. Tell the companies to stop making so many M games! CRAP!!!

socool9424@aol.com

Don't let your mother hear you using language like that, young man. We asked our friends over at Rockstar again about this, and they tell us that although a final decision hasn't been made, it does look extremely likely. The thinking is to produce versions akin to the different versions of music CDs that you see (those with the bad language and those without) so that the game can reach as broad an audience as possible. No other companies have mentioned doing similar things, so don't expect a toned-down MGS2 or anything.

QUICK HITS

Attention Span
I used to like reading the letters section of your magazine each month, but now they're all too long for me to read. Please put shorter letters in.

"J.G."
Loser225@aol.com

No, No, No
In issue 44 there was a letter saying that Rayman 2 really got a 4.5 because of the color of those discs that were blue. So does that mean Final Fantasy IX got a 4.5?

monkeyboye1188@hotmail.com

No, that's not what we said.

THE SOAP BOX

Why the f*@k can't I configure the f*&$@#g controller any damn way that I want to? If they could do it for Doom way back in the day for the PS one, they sure as hell should be able to do it today with the "next-generation" systems. Perfect examples are Quake III: Revolution and Unreal Tournament for the PS2. I don't like any of the controller configs for either game. I found one on Quake III that was usable, but I still don't like it. Unreal has 10 damn setups, and every damn one of them sucks.

Michael R. Owens
Thornton, CO

Got something you want to rant about? Get on our soap box and vent. E-mail us at OPM@ziffdavis.com and mark the subject line SOAPBOX.

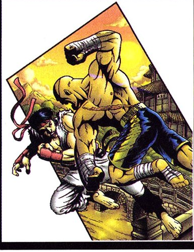
CRAIG A. HILL'S MOST WANTED

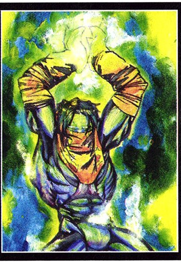
1. **My own PS2**
2. **Metal Gear Solid 2**
3. **GT3**
4. **Ace Combat 4**
5. **Twisted Metal: Black**
6. **Tekken 4**
7. **Z.O.E.**
8. **Final Fantasy X/XI**
9. **Blood Omen 2**
10. **Spy Hunter**

E-mail your most wanted list to **OPM@ziffdavis.com** Mark the subject MOST WANTED.

The Reader Art Challenge

Each month we pick one exceptional piece as our Reader Art of the Month. The winner will have his/her piece published and will receive a new game in the mail—so include your mailing address with all submissions. Congrats to this month's winner, Jeff Welborn!





Street Fighter pic (left)
Jeff Welborn
Shreveport, LA

Raziel pic (right)
Sherman McClain
Rosenberg, TX

Official Contest and Sweepstakes Rules

OPM READER ART CONTEST Official Contest Rules:
1. No Purchase Necessary: To enter, send an original piece of game-related art along with your name, address and phone number to "Reader Art" Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine, P.O. Box 3338, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338. No purchase or payment of any money is necessary to enter. One entry per household per month. Entries must be received by the 10th day of the month for the next available issue of OPM. All entries become exclusive property of Ziff Davis Media Inc. and will not be acknowledged or returned. Ziff Davis Media Inc. assumes no responsibility for lost, mutilated, late, illegible, incomplete, postage-due or misdirected entries. Sponsors reserve the right to cancel this contest at any time with appropriate notice. Only one prize per family, organization or household per month. 2. Prizes: One Grand Prize winner will receive one (1) video game or one (1) video game-related item as determined by Ziff Davis Media Inc. Grand Prize has an approximate retail value of $20-50. All entries will be judged on the following criteria by OPM editors, whose decisions are final: (50%) originality and (50%) creativity. Entries containing obscene language will be disqualified. All prize winners will be notified by mail. Prize(s) are non-transferable. No substitutions of prize(s) are allowed, except at the option of Ziff Davis Media Inc. should the featured prizes become unavailable. 3. Odds of Winning: The number of winners and the odds of winning will be determined by number of valid entries received. 4. Eligibility: Contest open to residents of United States and Canada. Void in Quebec. Non-compliance with the time parameters contained herein or return of any prize/prize notification as undeliverable will result in disqualification. Winners or their legal guardians shall sign an affidavit of eligibility/release of liability/prize acceptance within 5 days of receipt or forfeit prize. By acceptance of prize, winner(s) agree to the use of their name and/or likeness for purposes of advertising, trade or promotion without further compensation, unless prohibited by law. Ziff Davis Media Inc., nor its affiliates, subsidiaries, divisions or related companies are responsible or liable for any damages, taxes or expenses that consumers might incur as a result of this contest or receipt of prize. 5. Winners List: For a list of winners, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope identifying the month for which the winners list is requested to "OPM Reader Art Winners List," P.O. Box 3338, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338. Allow 4 weeks for delivery of winners list. 6. Restrictions: Void where prohibited or restricted by law. All federal, state and local regulations apply.

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OPM LETTER OF THE MONTH Official Contest Rules:
1. No Purchase Necessary: To enter, send a letter or standard-size postcard containing your name, address, and phone number together with your comments to "OPM Letter of the Month", PO Box 3338, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338. No purchase or payment of any money is necessary to enter. One entry per household. All entries must be handwritten. Mechanically reproduced entries will not be accepted. Entries must be received by the 10th day of the month for the next available issue of OPM. All entries become exclusive property of Ziff Davis Media Inc. and will not be acknowledged or returned. Ziff Davis Media Inc. assumes no responsibility for lost, mutilated, late, illegible, incomplete, postage-due or misdirected entries. 2. Prizes: One Grand Prize winner will receive a box containing various items from the OPM offices. Grand Prize has an approximate retail value of at least $10. Winners will be selected by a judging panel whose decisions are final. Winners shall be selected from all valid entries received. All entries will be judged on the following criteria by OPM editors, whose decisions are final: (50%) originality and (50%) creativity. Entries containing obscene language will be disqualified. All prize winners will be notified by mail. Prize(s) are non-transferable. No substitutions of prize(s) are allowed, except at the option of Ziff Davis Media Inc. should the featured prizes become unavailable. 3. Odds of Winning: The odds of winning will be determined by number of valid entries received. 4. Eligibility: Contest open to residents of United States and Canada. Void in Quebec. Non-compliance with the time parameters contained herein or return of any prize/prize notification as undeliverable will result in disqualification. Winners or their legal guardians shall sign an affidavit of eligibility/release of liability/prize acceptance within 5 days of receipt or forfeit prize. By acceptance of prize, winner(s) agree to the use of their name and/or likeness for purposes of advertising, trade or promotion without further compensation, unless prohibited by law. Neither Ziff Davis Media Inc., nor its affiliates, subsidiaries, divisions or related companies are responsible or liable for any damages, taxes or expenses that consumers might incur as a result of this contest or receipt of prize. 5. Winners List: For a list of winners, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope identifying the month for which the winners list is requested to "OPM Letter of the Month Winners List" at the address listed above. Allow 4 weeks for delivery of winners list. 6. Restrictions: Void where prohibited or restricted by law. All federal, state and local regulations apply.

ESCAPE FROM MONKEY ISLAND

TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
COMIC MISCHIEF
SUGGESTIVE THEMES
USE OF TOBACCO AND ALCOHOL

PlayStation 2

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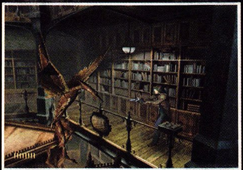

Solving this mystery won't be easy. Deadly creatures lurk in the shadows.

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Alone in the Dark
The New Nightmare

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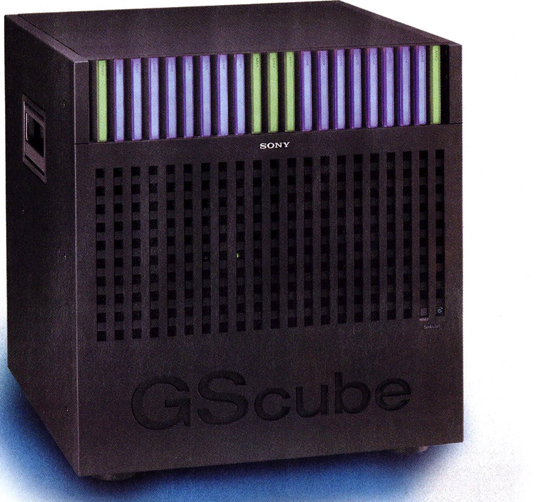


THIS IS NOT PS3

But is it a preview of what to expect from Sony's next system?

A recent article in *Wired* magazine had many PlayStation fans giddy with excitement. By describing the GScube (pictured above) as the "prototype of PlayStations to come," the story prompted a resurgence of rumors concerning the inevitable follow-up system to the PS2. Couple this with comments from Sony's senior vice president of R&D, Shin'ichi Okamoto, before the PS2 was released, and there's been plenty that's open to misinterpretation. "We are working to create the PlayStation 3 game machine," he said. "It will have 1,000 times the performance of the PlayStation 2."

So what gives? What is the GScube? And if it isn't a prototype of the PS3, then what the hell is it?

We could give you a rundown of the Cube's specifications, but quite frankly it would make your brain explode. It's a complicated piece of kit, but at its heart it's basically a lot of PS2s stuck together and jammed into a big black box. It's the equivalent of 16 PS2s, to be exact, all working together to generate visuals unlike anything you've ever seen. Imagine images generated at greater-than-HDTV resolution, always cranking at 60 frames per second, and almost lifelike in their level of realism. That's what the GScube can produce. Sounds like the perfect test for new console hardware. Well, yes it would be...if not for the fact that the thing is a 19-inch cube that weighs a little over 106 pounds. Given that there are 32 processors crammed into the thing (16 Graphics Synthesizers and 16 Emotion Engines), chances are it also generates so much heat it requires cooling technology based on alien hardware from space.

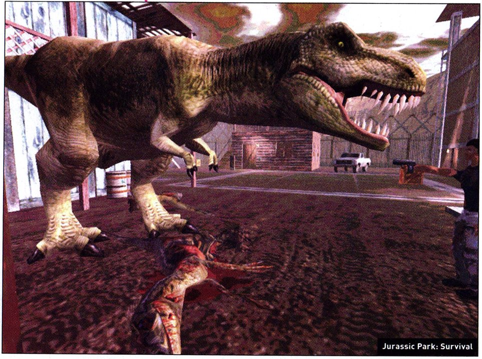
But why does the GScube exist? Well, it's been designed as a "visualizer" for broadband content generation. Basically it can generate fabulous-looking CG effects in real time, thus helping animators and artists create 3D scenes for movies or TV shows very quickly indeed—and output this as interactive environments, not just really funky-looking video. When it was unveiled at SIGGRAPH 2000 (the leading international conference on computer graphics) last July it was demonstrated with a sequence produced by Manex Visual Effects (the folks who worked on *The Matrix*). The effects it was generating in real time would normally take current methods an hour to render each individual frame of animation.

Impressive stuff indeed, and this is only the beginning. Future iterations of the GScube will group 64 Graphics Synthesizers into the box, generating enough processing power to probably open a wormhole to another dimension and also render photo-realistic footage that would be virtually indistinguishable from live video.

So what does this mean for PlayStation 3? If the GScube tells us anything, it's that the next jump in technology will be toward something that can provide the elusive "real" experience. It also hints that the next-generation system will be a network-oriented device, and this is further substantiated by comments we've heard from noted figures in the development community. Chances are we can expect the PS3 to be a box that sits on your TV, pulls content from a broadband connection, and integrates seamlessly with all the other kinds of entertainment you'd want to have blaring at you from your HDTV. When should we expect it? Well, from what we've heard, there won't be anything before 2005.

DINO CRISES

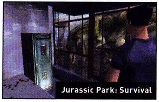
A new Jurassic Park hits theaters this year...and your PS2



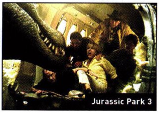
Jurassic Park: Survival

By now, you've probably heard at least a little something about the upcoming Jurassic Park flick, at this point simply titled *Jurassic Park III*. Set for release on July 18, the movie brings back *JP* vets Sam Neill (Alan Grant) and Laura Dern (Ellie Degler—a different last name from the first film, if that tells you anything), placing them alongside such other established Hollywood talent as William H. Macy (*Fargo*) and Tea Leoni (*Deep Impact*). As of press time, Universal Studios has yet to release much about the plot, though Neill has revealed to Australia's *Morning Herald* newspaper that *JP3*'s events take place in between those of the first movie and *The Lost World*. We can also expect new dinosaurs, as rumor suggests pteranodons to finally cause havoc, like they did so memorably in Michael Crichton's original *JP* book.

Naturally, a blockbuster movie like *JP3* won't come without a video game tie-in. Though Universal Interactive has released next to nothing as far as actual information regarding the PS2's first JP game, the company has released a few screens, including the two on display here. We also know its title to be Jurassic Park: Survival, suggesting a possible stab at the same survival-horror genre shared by Resident Evil and—dare we already make the comparisons?— Dino Crisis. Regardless, odds are pretty high that you'll be hearing a lot about Survival in the coming months. A fall release seems likely.



Jurassic Park: Survival



Jurassic Park 3

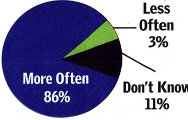
OVERHEARD: HIDEO KOJIMA

"I actually hate random enemy encounters. I'm hoping that in the future a Dragon Quest or Pokémon would allow you to change the game depending on your tastes. You'd plug in some sort of memory card which contains your personal preferences, and the game would change accordingly."

—Konami's Hideo Kojima (Metal Gear Solid) talks about what he envisions the future of gaming could be like.

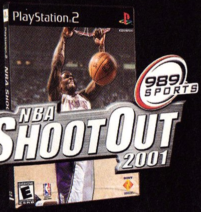
OPM Reader Poll

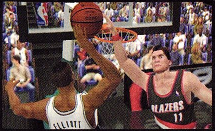
In the future, do you plan on using the DVD movie feature on your PS2 more often?



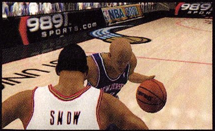
Resident Evil's Sexy Siren

Now that shooting has begun on Constantin Films' *Resident Evil* movie, the studio has finally released this single shot to the press. The teaser picture above features the beautiful star, Milla Jovovich (*The Fifth Element, The Messenger*), in her role as a character named Alice. So far, the only other character announced is Rain, whom Michelle Rodriguez (*Girlfight*) will portray. The Oct. 26 release also stars Eric Mabius (*The Crow: Salvation*), as well as several other actors whom we're sure you've never heard of and probably don't even care about.

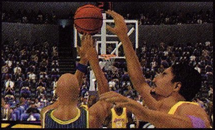

PlayStation 2
989 SPORTS
NBA SHOOTOUT 2001



Over 50 NBA Signature Dunks



Close the Lanes with Auto Defend



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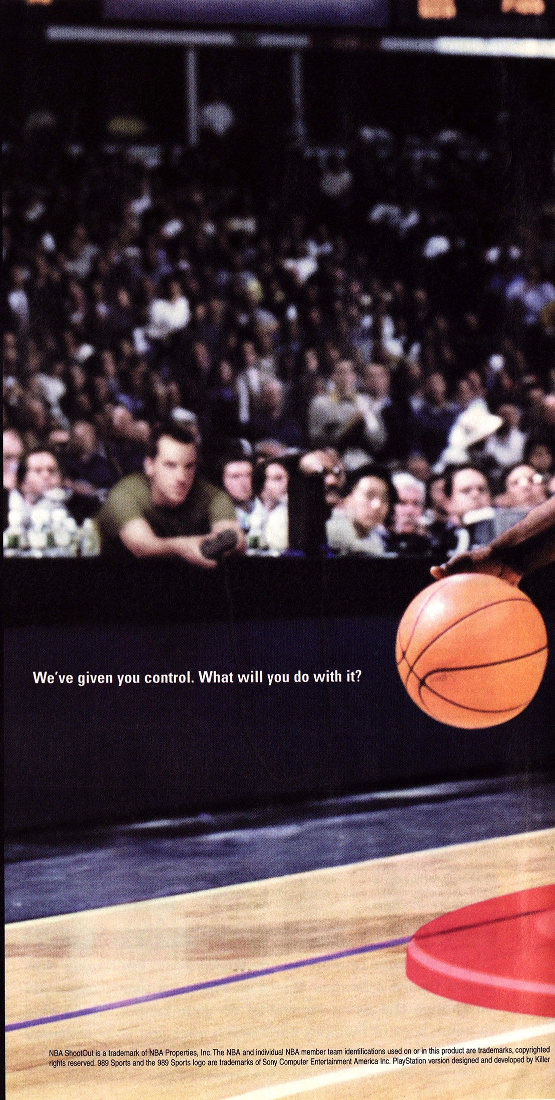
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ZOE FLOWER

THE CRYING GAME

Have you ever cried over a video game? I don't mean tears of frustration over poor controls, a clunky interface or the final elusive cookie you need to master the game. I mean true emotional attachment. We've all had extremely emotional visual experiences in our lives, most likely in the format of film or television (I bet you cried too when E.T. went home).

So why doesn't this translate into the realm of the interactive as easily?

Japanese game designer Matsuma Masuura asked the same questions during his recent presentation on "The Cultural Borderlines of Games." The "Papa of PaRappa" (dripping pure cool with his white blonde hair and orange sneakers) asked casually, "Have you ever cried in a game?" My hand crept skyward, solitary. The male-dominated crowd could have been keeping quiet to avoid embarrassment, but the point is that, universally, video games hit an emotional ceiling when it comes to inducing the entire gamut of feelings.

Why would a tearful outpouring be a benchmark of emotional success in a game? We've all laughed out loud, experienced the emotions of fear, anticipation, excitement and outright frustration from a game. Isn't that proof that games have mastered the art of emotional entertainment? Should we care about more complex emotions like regret, longing, insecurity, revenge? I say, DEFINITELY. Bringing the entire spectrum of human feeling into the digital domain could open up the field to whole new experiences and genres, helping games gain ground in the mainstream world.

Sony thinks so, too. The PS2's aptly named "emotion engine" was supposed to give designers the tools to output emotional content, at least as I understood it (yes, I'm occasionally naive!). Unfortunately, this currently translates into beefed-up graphics and lightning-fast load times slapped on top of content we've all seen and played before.

Nonbelievers argue that video games can be restarted at any time, so the player never really cares about the consequences of his actions, resulting in a detached experience no matter how well-designed the game is. I don't buy that for a second. We've all devoted hours of our time to an epic story or battle. Doesn't sound like "detached" behavior to me.

Perhaps we have become socially conditioned to movies and television, requiring specific timeframes, camera angles and other subtle emotional cues to create a deep emotional response. After all, the game I cried in was Final Fantasy VIII, and I'm sure it had a great deal to do with the intense "Hollywood" cinematics . (The previous statement does not endorse the use of more cutscenes and less gameplay to evoke a reaction.)

Maybe my crying had more to do with the fact that I'm a girl who also weeps over *Party of Five* reruns, stray kittens and bad haircuts. Regardless, I stand by my belief that exploring complex emotions in games will make for more interesting content. And, until a game makes me truly sad, I won't be happy.

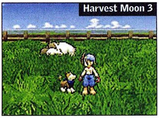
Zoe Flower is a presenter and producer for the Canadian TV show *Electric Playground*. She's also a Web designer, writer and video game fanatic. Check out her work at www.elecplay.com or www.zoeflower.com.

New RPGs Hit Japan

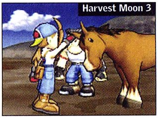
A LOOK AT THE LATEST PS2 RPGS IN JAPAN

With the PS2 really starting to pick up steam in Japan, lots of new role-playing games are being announced almost every week. We decided to take a look at some of the more promising ones.

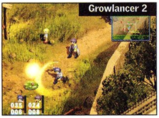
The first is Harvest Moon 3, the latest installment in the cult classic crop-growing life-sim series. Along with an enormous graphical enhancement, the game will give you more flexibility in how you spend your time on the farm. Harvest Moon 3 will release in June in Japan and possibly late this year in the U.S. Another promising title is Endonesia from Enix. This adventure RPG will run in real time, but with a twist—once every 10 days, the world you live in will loop back to that first day. Endonesia hits Japan in May. One other Japanese RPG that's caught our attention is Growlancer 2 from Atlus. Featuring very detailed hand-drawn graphics, along with a talented group of developers working on the game, Growlancer 2 could turn out nicely. It hits Japan this summer, and Atlus may opt to bring it here later on.



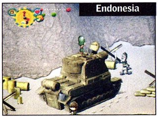
Harvest Moon 3



Harvest Moon 3



Growlancer 2



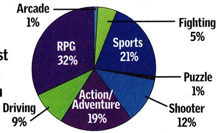
Endonesia

In Other RPG News...

- Jade Cocoon 2 for the PS2 is on track for a release this summer in Japan. The game is said to have a new engine as well as online elements.
- **Bad news for those looking forward to Star Ocean 3. Enix previously stated the game was going to come out in spring of this year in Japan, but the company actually meant spring of *next* year. Oh well...**
- Suikoden III for the PS2 has been given a release date of December in Japan. A U.S. release will likely follow in spring 2002.
- **Square will be showcasing a new PS2 game at the Electronic Entertainment Expo in May. Stay tuned for details on it soon.**

OPM Reader Poll

Which kind of games are you most looking forward to playing online with your PS2?



DATA STREAM

Tarzan Returns

Ubi Soft is developing a sweet-looking new PS2 game based on Disney's *Tarzan* animated film. Look for it this fall.

Capcom Update

Good news, Mega Man fans—Capcom is already hard at work on Mega Man X6 for the PS one. And PS2 fighting fans get ready for the 2D fighter SNK vs. Capcom 2 this fall!

Tony Hawk Again

Activision is currently working on Tony Hawk 3 for the PS one and PS2 for release this fall. Naturally, expect it to kick ass.

Flash Back

Here's a little nugget for you: Sony's Phase Paradox (previewed in *OPM* 43) continues the story of Philosoma, one of the original shooters on the PS one. No word yet on if the PS2 title is headed stateside.

Zip It Real Good

Iomega plans to release a USB Zip Drive for the PS2, which will allow you to play new levels for games downloaded off the Internet as well as store new self-created data. Cool, huh? Several publishers are already on board to support it.

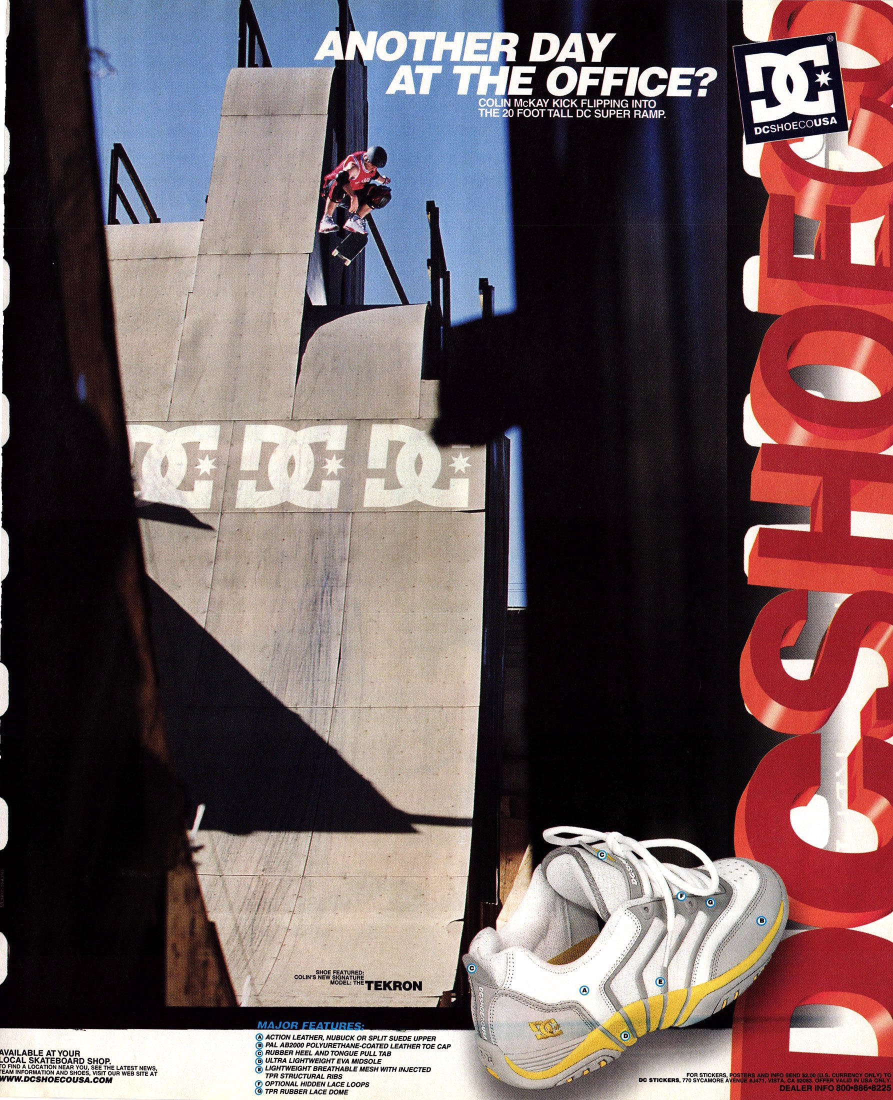
Broken Times 3

Revolution Software has revealed that Broken Sword 3 is in the works for the PS2. Look for it to release in 2002.

OVERHEARD: MARTIN EDMONSON

"Imagine how the second- and third-gen titles will look when everyone gets to grips with the system. Compare the first Ridge Racer with RR4, Gran Turismo or Driver—I think the difference between generations of software on PS2 will be even more marked."

—Martin Edmonson of Reflections (Driver series) tells *OPM* what excites him most about the PS2.



ANOTHER DAY AT THE OFFICE?

COLIN McKAY KICK FLIPPING INTO
THE 20 FOOT TALL DC SUPER RAMP.

SHOE FEATURED:
COLIN'S NEW SIGNATURE
MODEL: THE **TEKRON**

MAJOR FEATURES:

- Ⓐ *ACTION LEATHER, NUBUCK OR SPLIT SUEDE UPPER*
- Ⓑ *PAL AB2000 POLYURETHANE-COATED LEATHER TOE CAP*
- Ⓒ *RUBBER HEEL AND TONGUE PULL TAB*
- Ⓓ *ULTRA LIGHTWEIGHT EVA MIDSOLE*
- Ⓔ *LIGHTWEIGHT BREATHABLE MESH WITH INJECTED TPR STRUCTURAL RIBS*
- Ⓕ *OPTIONAL HIDDEN LACE LOOPS*
- Ⓖ *TPR RUBBER LACE DOME*

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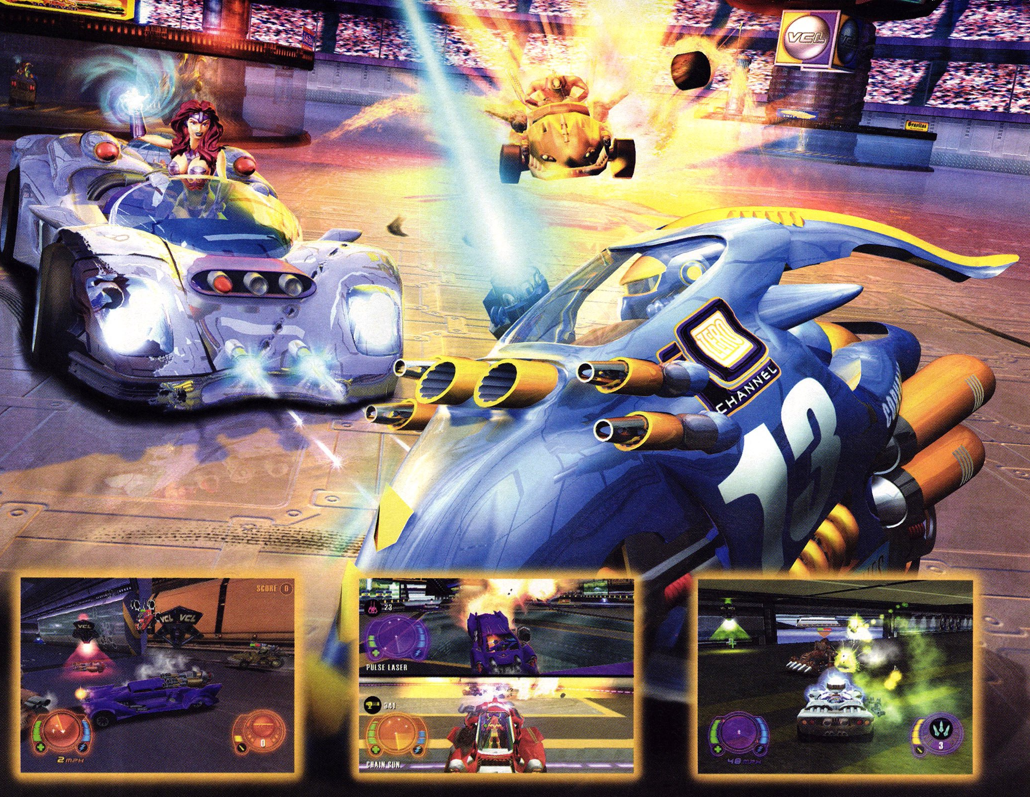

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB Violence

PlayStation 2

beyondgames

INFOGRAMES

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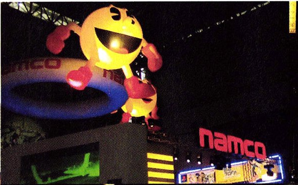
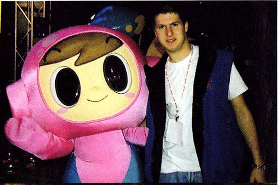
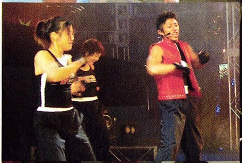
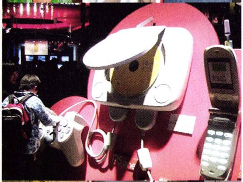


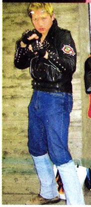


PS2
PlayStation.2
PlayStation®
Square

FINAL FANTASY X
SQUARE







TOKYO GAME SHOW

Japan's premier gaming event allows gamers a first peek at Final Fantasy X and more.

The Tokyo Game Show, held in the spring and fall of every year, is a festival for Japanese video game enthusiasts. Not only does the show give them the opportunity to check out some of the latest and greatest new game wares, but it also offers up plenty of entertainment. At the Tokyo Game Show (commonly known as TGS), you'll see everything from flashy stage presentations to musical concerts to popular mascots walking the floor. You can purchase all your favorite video game merchandise—everything from T-shirts to air guns branded for certain games. There's even a place between halls where youngsters, and sometimes oldsters, dress up as their favorite game characters and pose for pictures. The show is always exciting, to say the least, and for anyone into games in Tokyo, it's the place to be. And without a doubt people know that, because TGS is *always* crowded. Crowded as all hell. Even when there's unseasonably cold weather and snow, which happened this time around. Before the show, massive lines adorn the streets leading to the convention center in Chiba, and once under way, the halls are packed tight. But that's all part of the fun of TGS. Or maybe not, but you have to keep telling yourself that in order to withstand it.

This year's spring show was actually a tad smaller than usual, with fewer booths and some major companies absent, including Sega. Blame that on the transition phase that the industry is going through at the moment (both Nintendo and Microsoft have yet to release their next-generation platforms, resulting in a slower period right now). But Sony had a very strong presence with some major PS2 titles on the show floor, including Final Fantasy X and GT3 (both previewed in this issue). Both titles attracted massive crowds and were no doubt the stars of the show. Nearly the entire Square booth was dedicated to FFX, and a portion of the Sony booth also featured FFX kiosks. GT3 alone took up about a quarter of the space of Sony's enormous booth area. Sony also featured a whole slew of other third-party titles in its booth, something it refrained from doing in the past.

Other PS2 titles that garnered a lot of attention at the show were Silent Hill 2 from Konami and Shadow Hearts from Aruze. The playable demo for Silent Hill 2 was really short and seemed early, but it gave gamers a great indication of the style and mood the designers hope to convey. Shadow Hearts—developed by Sacnoth, which is made up of a lot of former Square guys—was undoubtedly "the RPG you played after you checked out FFX" for most people. It's easy to see why—the game looks like it could end up being a hit RPG for the PS2.

As for PS one games, sadly, there weren't many worth talking about. Many hoped before the show that they'd catch a glimpse of Sega's first offerings for the PS one—such as its Sonic the Hedgehog collection or just about any other Saturn ports—but those were unfortunately absent. These aren't likely to be seen until the Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3) in May. Music games were still shown for the PS one, but the dearth of most other genres was a clear sign that the system is fading in Japan. Which seems strange considering that PS one titles like Dragon Quest VII (which has now sold more than 4 million units) are still moving remarkably well there. At least Konami was showing Castlevania Chronicles for the PS one, which looked very solid indeed.

Overall, the show was a tad disappointing in terms of software, but was still an exciting spectacle for gamers.

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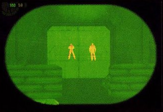
It's time to realize that conditions on Mars will not improve. It's time to stand up and fight! We must fight for our rights, for our freedom, for our very lives! We've got the weapons, the vehicles and the technology. Now all we need is you!

Be ready to strike with us. Wait for my signal. When it comes, strike hard and strike fast. We must free Mars!

BETTER RED THAN DEAD

FIGHT BACK

We've taken out control towers with our new Geo-Mod™ technology, hijacked Ultor's vehicles by ambushing supply lines, and raided bunkers to amass a huge arsenal of weapons. Check out this surveillance footage from our most recent assault.



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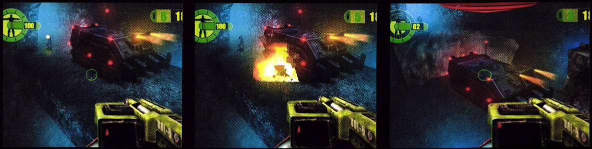
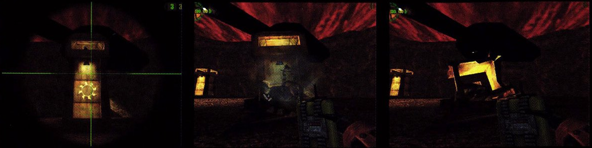
GEO-MOD™ TECHNOLOGY

Utilize Geo-Mod technology, the most sophisticated form of real-time geometry modification, which enables complete environmental destruction. Flank enemies by creating new pathways through the environment. Blow holes in the floor to stop oncoming foes. In layman's terms, **DESTROY EVERYTHING IN SIGHT** to achieve the goal. There are no boundaries to constrain your fury.



There's no need to spend large amounts of ammo eliminating this highly armed convoy. With Geo-Mod technology, just two strategically placed blasts to the bridge from the Rocket Launcher will send them all tumbling into the abyss.



No time to pick off enemies in a guard tower one by one? Blow out the base of the tower and bring the whole thing crashing down.

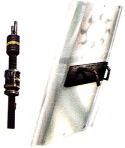
YOUR ARSENAL

Gear up with over 15 different weapons to destroy Ultor's guards and mercenaries. All the weapons have secondary firing capabilities, making them some of the most sophisticated in the solar system. Here's a sample:

Heavy Suppression Machine Gun

Remote Mining Charge

Sniper Rifle



Riot Stick & Body Shield

Flame Thrower

Magnetic Rail Driver

Rocket Launcher
(with infra-red scope)

THE VEHICLES

We have land, sea, and air vehicles, each with a unique arsenal of weapons and capabilities.

Driller

Drill through walls!

Submarine

Fire homing torpedoes to eliminate subs and other underwater foes!

Aesir Fighter

Wield the flying Aesir's mighty weapons to wipe out enemies below!

ATV

Handle the Martian landscape with this rugged all-terrain vehicle. Utilize the mounted machine gun to wipe out enemies!

APC

Bomb, strafe, and crush foes in the awesome Armored Personnel Carrier!

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MATURE
M
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Violence
Blood and Gore

volition

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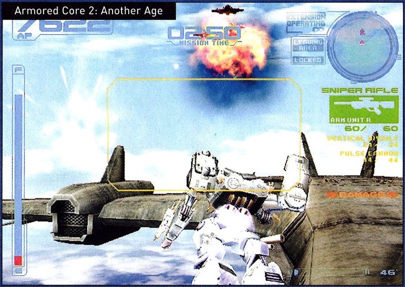
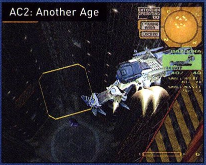
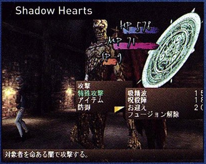

Armored Core 2: Another Age

AC2: Another Age


AC2: Another Age

Phase Paradox

Some other PS2 highlights at TGS include Armored Core 2: Another Age, which features much improved graphics and gameplay. The RPG Shadow Hearts also kept us entertained for quite a while. We were delighted to finally get our hands on Age of Empires for the PS2 (which supports USB keyboard, mouse and modem). Finally, Sony's adventure game Phase Paradox also had us hooked.


Shadow Hearts

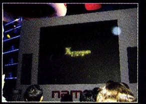
Sam "Hotpants" Kennedy's hands-down favorite PS one game at the show was Castlevania Chronicles.

SCORE-000000 TIME 400 STAGE 01
PLAYER
ENEMY
P-03

Age of Empires 2

PS2 Xenogears Sequel Announced

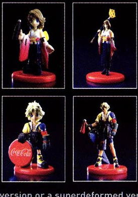
One of the highlights of this year's TGS was the announcement of a PS2 sequel to the popular PS one RPG Xenogears. Titled Xenosaga, this new game is being developed by MonolithSoft, which is essentially composed of the same bunch of guys who developed the original—except at the time they were employed by Square. And this time around, Namco will be publishing the game. This may mean that there won't be any direct references to the original game in the sequel, thus keeping Square's lawyers happy.



So far we know that the game takes place on a different planet than the original's and features an entirely new cast of characters. And great news for fans of the first game's music—Yasunori Mitsuda (Chrono Cross) will return to handle the orchestration.

Xenosaga will release sometime in 2002. We can't wait!

Coca-Cola FFX Promotion in Japan



Some of you may remember that last year Square and the Coca-Cola Company came up with a cross-promotion for Final Fantasy IX with a series of character figures and other collectible merchandise packaged in with select bottles of Coca-Cola. Well, the two have teamed up once again, this time for Final Fantasy X. Starting this spring in Japan, select 500ml bottles of Coca-Cola will include one of 32 collectible Final Fantasy X figures. Each character will be represented with a true-to-the-game version or a superdeformed version. These can also come painted or unpainted. So far, the only two characters who have been revealed are the game leads, Tidus and Yuna.

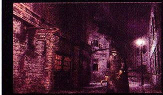
DATA STREAM

Trigger Happy

TIME CRISIS II

Namco has revealed that it will be bringing one of its most popular arcade shooters home to the PS2 this fall. Look for a major graphical upgrade. Also, look for it to release with a new PS2 GunCon peripheral.

It's About Time



Surprise! Clock Tower 3 is in the works for the PS2. Capcom and Sunsoft have teamed up to salvage the series after its previous developer, Human, went under. The team includes the scenario writer of Devil May Cry, along with other top-notch Capcom talent.

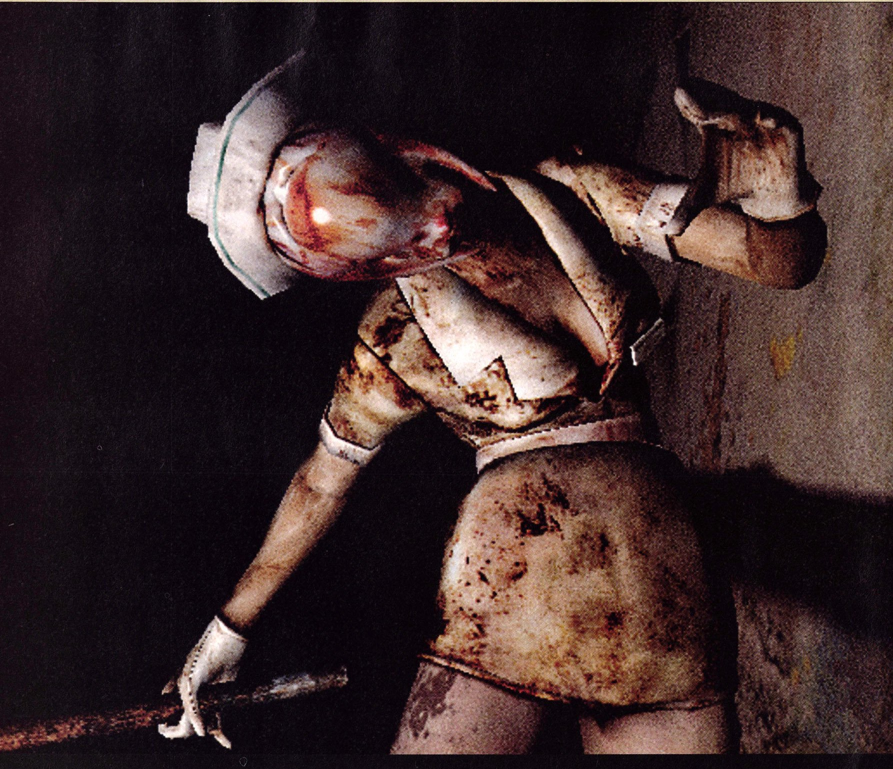
Another Hot Shot

Sony's Hot Shots Golf 3 won't be the only comical PS2 golf game in town anymore. Sierra plans to release Minigolf Maniacs this fall, and rumors say it'll support online play.

Japan PS2 News

Sony has released a new model of the PS2 in Japan (SCPH-3000) that incorporates the new PS2 hard drive and broadband network interface. Word has it that the package will soon see a U.S. release. Software sales have also risen dramatically in Japan, with Onimusha taking the top spot at 1 million units sold to date.

RETURN TO SILENT HILL



With its cinematic approach, Silent Hill helped redefine the way horror is presented in video games—and that was surely one of the reasons why the game became so popular. Capcom's Resident Evil may have had more action and shock value, but Konami's Silent Hill had *style*. Instead of nefarious beasts suddenly jumping at you from behind glass windows, Silent Hill's enemy encounters were often slow and more built up. You knew there was an enemy up ahead—you could just feel it. But due to lack of visibility along with the dramatic camera angles and aural mood setting, you didn't always know exactly where it was hiding. And that was, well, scary. Because of this, Silent Hill toyed with gamers' emotions, evoking deep fear in just about anyone who dared to play it.

"As in the first title, rather than expressing direct fright to the player, we are trying to focus on instinctive fears."

Silent Hill 2 continues what was started with the original, but takes things to the next level with the power of the PS2. This time around, thanks to the added realism, the terror is greatly intensified. *OPM* recently sat down with an early version of the game, and we were completely shocked. This is some seriously messed up stuff, folks—like something out of your worst nightmares. Dismembered corpses with trailing blood and gore; disgusting sloth and self-torture; demented, carnal lust—it's outright evil like you've never come across in a video game.

"I believe we were able to create a distinct world view in Silent Hill," producer Akihiro Imamura points out about his original horror creation. "But this time around, we want to create a game that, while it maintains a similar taste as the original, features a whole new story and a completely new presentation." It's immediately apparent that this is Silent Hill—the town is filled with fog, you're required to explore dark hallways with a flashlight—but the sequel certainly does have a new style to it. Imamura drew his inspiration for this new Silent Hill chapter from an interesting source. "I watched a lot of David Lynch films," he says. "It wasn't necessarily just one or two particular movies, but rather his work and presentation overall—his style. I borrowed a little taste of his style for Silent Hill 2."

But while the Lynchspirations are likely very subtle in the game, there are some elements that are immediately noticeable—such as the noisy, grainy look of the screen. Why did Imamura opt to use this unique graphical trait for the sequel? "The new generations of game consoles can surely produce more polygons and accomplish better CG movies," Imamura states, "but the glarey, polished CG-ish look is still there. In Silent Hill 2, we are really proud of the analog film kind of style. We wanted to create as non-polygonal-ish an image as possible. That's why the game has the noisy look to it."

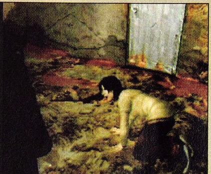
Other elements like the flashlight and fog were used in the original to make up for the graphical limitations of the PS one while at the same time setting the mood. It would be a natural assumption that thanks to the PS2 these effects would no longer be required for the sequel, but Imamura disagrees. "For Silent Hill 2, we want to do that same sort of presentation again," he says. "The fear of not being able to see what's ahead or around you is something that really disturbs human beings. That's why we need to use the flashlight. Also, even on the PS2 this effect can help us accomplish things graphically: If we cut down on the number of polygons, we can use better textures. This makes things look better, so there's another reason."

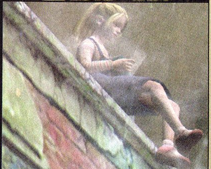
But just as much as the graphics are integral to setting the mood in the original as well as the sequel, so is the sound. After playing the original, you'll forever have the haunting sound of the radio ingrained in your mind. Imamura claims that the radio and other sound effects will be greatly enhanced for the sequel. "The radio noise in Silent Hill was monotonous, so we are working on making it more natural for the sequel—more like an actual radio." Silent Hill 2 is also the first title to make use of a new 3D audio tool library from Sony. "You'll be able to hear where sounds are coming from in the game (upward to downward, front to back, direction and distance), and this can be accomplished just by using two speakers or just a pair of headphones."

Silent Hill 2 will also feature lots more voice—which raises the question of voice talent being used for the game (since Konami's recent titles like Zone of the Enders and Shadow of Destiny had poor U.S. voice-overs). CG director and character designer Takayoshi Sato, who recently moved to the U.S. to work from Konami's U.S. studio, chimes in. "That's one of the reasons I went to work from the U.S.," he explains. "This sort of thing could be focused on with me here. Konami is a Japanese company, but is now doing lots of business worldwide, and it's absolutely integral to us that we learn more about the American and other cultures when making products. We'll make sure that the voice-overs won't disappoint."

While the graphics and sound both seem to be getting their respective upgrades, so

Silent Hill 2 cont.





will the gameplay. "We've been constantly thinking about ways to improve it," says Imamura. "We plan to not only have radio-control-style control, but also Super Mario 64-style control. And for the Japanese audience we're thinking about having a single button for shooting. [Japanese gamers often prefer more simplistic gameplay than U.S. gamers.]

Having been in development for a year and 10 months, Silent Hill 2 is only now beginning to really take shape. But with a good six months left in its development cycle, the group feels it has plenty of time to perfect this sequel. Not surprisingly, this team has grown considerably since the original title was put together. "All of the core members have returned for the sequel," says Imamura, "but making games for the PS2 takes more resources than the PS one. Roughly, I'd say that the number of people we have working on the sequel has doubled over that of the original. Frankly, making games on the PS2 takes twice the manpower, and costs twice as much." But with the results the team is getting, Sato and Imamura, who have to work together with 3,000 miles in between, don't seem to mind. "The group is very cohesive and everyone adds input," says Sato. "But it can be a difficult thing. We've changed the main scenario completely twice already. Basically, everyone makes suggestions about tricks, scenarios and lines in the game. Our scenario writer compiles all of those ideas and writes a core story. Then we have a meeting and discuss and tweak the lines and scenarios. It takes a long time, but we want to make this thing as good as we can."

The long development time and the patience the team is having with coming up with the scenarios is a good sign. If there's one thing the team really wants to accomplish, it's to once again scare people as they did with the original. "As in the first title, rather than expressing direct fright to the player, we are trying to focus on instinctive fear," says Imamura, "such as the fear of knowing something is hidden in the dark. Basically, it's like the fear in Silent Hill 1, but much deeper." Sato agrees: "Last time, we concentrated on the atmosphere and the feeling that the town has. This time, we concentrated on not only atmosphere but also human emotions, which allows us to express a deep, profound story."

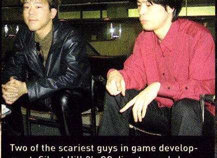
From what we've seen so far, these guys have nothing to worry about. Silent Hill 2 is undoubtedly shaping up to be one of this year's biggest horror titles. Even the little we've played so far featured a great deal of shockingly disturbing visuals. With this in mind, we ask Sato if he's at all concerned that he and his team may be stretching things too far. "Yeah, nowadays we are getting nervous about that," he admits. "But these elements are necessary to explain the story of Silent Hill. There were things that we toned down, though—take, for example, the fat guy puking, did you see that?" Unfortunately, we had. A vile scene if we've ever witnessed one—an ugly man looking as if he hadn't showered or seen the light of day in weeks making an awful mess of himself. An image that we would have rather forgotten. "Well, the scene was originally accompanied by a lot of disgusting sound effects," Sato continues, "and it had lots more vomiting. But for some reason during our editing process, the computer we were using crashed and we lost it. I figured it was a message from God telling me that we went too far, so we decided to tone it down."

Interestingly, the original concepts for Silent Hill 2 were even gorier than what's up and running today. "We originally wanted to have you chopping off the enemies' arms or heads when you hit them," Imamura points out. "But because of CESA's [Computer Electronics Software Association, the committee that oversees game software in Japan] code of ethics, we opted not to have that. During development we didn't think of that code at first, though, so we had to change our plans later. We are always trying to do what we envision for the game first, but if it's going to be in the gray area, we usually consult them about it first." So the game is acceptable on CESA standards, but what about for the U.S. market? "Most of the guys on our team did the original game," says Imamura, "so we have a good idea of how it'll be rated for the U.S. market. When it gets into the gray area, we sometimes consult sales people in the U.S. to see if things would be acceptable or not."

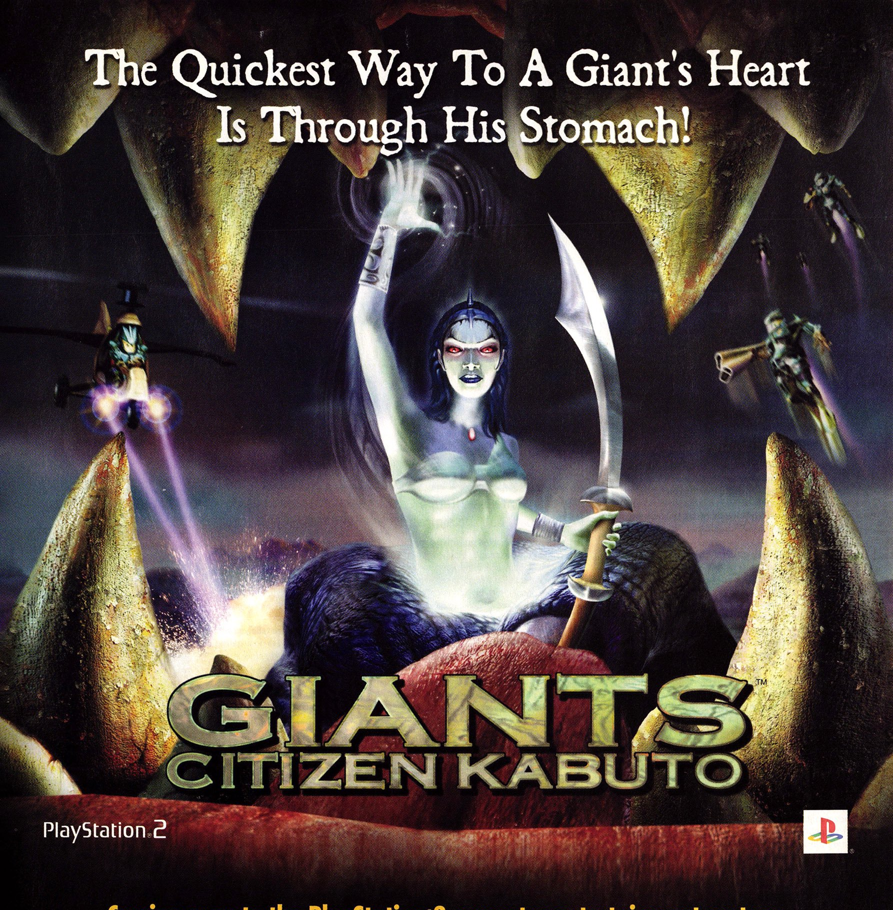
Whether the game ends up being acceptable or not, there's no question that it'll scare loads of people, just as the original did. Imamura and his team have the whole horror thing down pat, that's for sure. But we can't help wondering to ourselves: Spending so much of their lives in the Silent Hill universe and working with all these dark creatures, do these guys ever get nightmares? Surely even the masters must get scared.

"I don't get haunted by the games because I see the creatures we deal with every day," says Imamura. "I guess I've just gotten used to them." Sato agrees, but he admits to having been a little freaked out in the past. "I've never had a nightmare," he says, "but for some reason one of our hard drives crashed three times and we can't figure out why. One time we lost 18 gigs of material. I just couldn't figure out what was wrong with it. But now I'm honestly thinking it has to do with Silent Hill..."

> **"I figured it was a message from God telling me that we went too far, so we decided to tone it down."**



Two of the scariest guys in game development: Silent Hill 2's CG director and character designer Takayoshi Sato (left) and producer Akihiro Imamura.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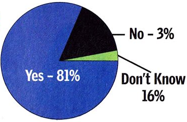
OPM Reader Poll

Do you think you will eventually use the online feature for the PS2?



JOHN SCALZI

KIDS, NOT ENEMIES

When I was in high school, I wrote a story about killing off every single one of my teachers.

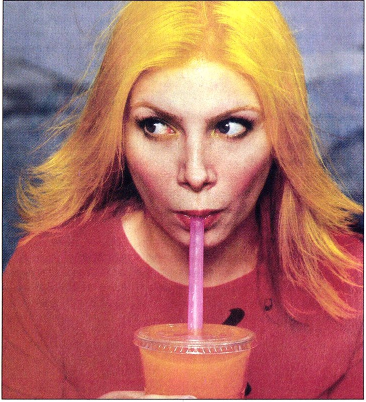
And we're not just talking about blowing them all up in one big explosion (although, as a matter of narrative convenience, that was how most of them went). Particular teachers were singled out for deaths consistent with their personalities. The earthy-crunchy teacher was found with leaves and twigs in every orifice. The history teacher who hated our nation's 15th president was discovered with "Buchanan" carved into her forehead. A geometry teacher was hoisted on her own protractor. Everyone knew I was writing the story, including the teachers. Every once in a while one would come up and ask if I had killed him off yet. They seemed to be excited to find out how I whacked them. It was fun for everybody.

If I wrote the same story as a teenager today, I'd probably be expelled from most schools in the country. You couldn't get away with that story anymore, not since Columbine, not since Santana High School. People would see that sort of story as a danger. Anyone who'd write *that* is a threat. The assumption now seems to be that teenagers are always on the verge of exploding, and that the slightest sign of violent thought—in a story they've written or read, in a song they listen to, in a video game they play—is indicative of a disorder that could one day cause the kid to snap in the worst way. Teens, by their rebellious and messed-up nature, are now seen as a permanent potential enemy, an unlit stick of TNT.

I quite obviously never acted out on my ideas in that story—indeed, I graduated with many friends in the faculty, the teacher I "killed" with the leaves and twigs being one whom I respected and admired the most. And now I make part of my living helping parents make responsible decisions about the video games they bring into their homes. I didn't grow up to become an enemy of the state; I never was one to begin with. Neither is almost every kid who plays violent games, watches violent movies, or writes black little stories in school.

I am clearly for parents taking an active role in what their children watch, play and hear. I'm for intelligent, thoughtful ways to make our schools safe places for our children. I'm for making sure those kids who *do* need help get it before they hurt themselves or others. But all of these things can be done without first assuming that our kids are the enemy. Kids *know* how we feel about them. The last thing we need is an entire generation believing they're distrusted and feared. Imagine what sort of adults they might grow up to be.

John Scalzi runs GameDad, a video game site for parents. Visit it at www.gamedad.com.



A League of Her Own

Pop chanteuse Vitamin C has a song in Triple Play Baseball, but she almost became a player as well.

So how did you wind up with a song in Triple Play Baseball? I blabbed in a bunch of interviews that I was into Triple Play and that I'm a huge baseball fan, so the people from EA Sports got in touch and asked if I'd like to have a song in the game.

Did you get to see the game before you said yes? No, I was just, "OK." I was way into it. Every year, the game gets better, so I wasn't concerned that all of a sudden they would change the game into something no one would want to play.

Whose decision was it to use your cover of The Waitresses' "I Know What Boys Like"? EA Sports. I submitted three songs that I thought would be good for the game—that, "Where's The Party" and "Busted"—and they preferred "Boys."

They were going to make you a playable character in the game, but didn't have enough time to do so. How did this happen? It was all very organic. After we talked about me doing a song, they asked if I'd be into doing some motion-capture stuff—because they've done that before with people like Robbie Williams and FIFA—and I was like, "Oh my god, that would be so cool."

How long have you been into baseball? Since I was a kid, though there were some lean years we don't like to talk about. I've been a Yankees fan my whole life—I've never liked any other team—but as a Yankees fan, we just pretend those years didn't happen.

How often does someone take *you* out to the ball game? I used to go to games quite frequently. When I'm home, in New York, I go a couple times a month. Though last year I only got to go once because I was touring.

How often do you play Triple Play? We used to play all the time when we were recording, but on my new album I didn't because there was no time. Sometimes you do an album and there's downtime, so I'll sit in the lounge playing Triple Play, but this album wasn't like that.

So are your baseball-loving relatives psyched that you're part of this game? Yes, everyone's pretty excited. I don't know if my dad will play the game, but he'll get a kick out of it.

Any plans to have you or your songs in any other video games? No, but I would definitely do it. I think it's a really cool thing. Best of all, you get a free copy of the game (laughs).

Vitamin C's new album is called More.

DATA STREAM

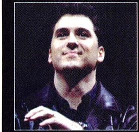
Ready to Roll?

MGM Interactive and developer Runecraft are currently working on a game based on the upcoming Hollywood remake of *Rollerball*. The title, which is likely to be published by EA, should hit alongside the theatrical release later this year.

Superman's Back

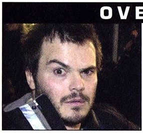
Infogrames has revealed that it has two Superman games in the works for the PS2, including an action combat title.

Smacked Down



Now that the WWF has bought out rival wrestling league WCW, it remains to be seen what will happen to upcoming WCW games. Electronic Arts, which currently holds the WCW license, is using a wait-and-see approach, and has placed its WCW PS2 game on indefinite hold. THQ, which holds the WWF license, is looking into the possibility of including WCW wrestlers in upcoming games.

OVERHEARD: JACK BLACK



"Whenever I have a job, I look forward to finishing it. That's my favorite time, when there are no booked gigs in the future. There's nothing but, like, PlayStation."

—*High Fidelity*'s and Tenacious D's Jack Black, as quoted in the U.K.'s *Total Film* magazine

Vitamin C photo by Robin Thomas/Corbis Outline. Jack Black photo by Steve Granitz/WireImage.com

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WE GOT THE FUNK

Funkmaster Flex, MTV and New York's hottest DJ, mixes it up with *OPM*

If you don't know who Funkmaster Flex is, you should. He's best known for his work on New York's Hot 97, but can also be found on MTV's Direct Effect. He's also the founder and CEO of Franchise Records and has four albums on the market. Since 1984 he's been spinning and now takes up more air time per week than any DJ in the country (even topping Howard Stern!). Now that he's featured on MTV Music Generator 2, we had the perfect excuse to pick Flex's brain.

Photograph by Danny Clinch/CorbisOutline

What's the best part about spinning?
I'd say being able to make people move. Knowing that you can change the mood or energy in the room by throwing on a record.

How long does it take to mix a song once you have the samples together?
It depends. Sometimes I'll have people play. Sometimes I'll have people do the kick and snare. A sample could take any amount of time because I have to clear the sample [through the record companies]. A song with a sample could take anywhere from two days to six months. But if there are no samples, sometimes I can mix a song in a week.

Does it ever happen that a song gets put together really quickly?
Sometimes, if the vibe is right. And the artists are clicking.

Do you ever know when a mix is perfect?
After you mix it, sometimes you play for people and you know—you can feel it in your heart. And you know it's going to be that knocker.

Is there ever a time when you're laying out a song and you stop and think, "That's it. I got it."?
Usually on a track without the vocals I can feel what it's going to be. Or what it's going to do. Sometimes I have a track down and then I get the vibe of what [vocal] artist I want to put on it.

Moving on to spinning, do you feel like DJing qualifies as art?
Yeah, I think a DJ is an artist. I get every record that every other DJ gets. None of us get different records from day one. How that DJ puts his records together is how far he's gotten. How I put my records together is what's gotten me here. It's what comes out of the speaker and the radio, and then you attach yourself to it. If you attach yourself to mediocre work, then you're a mediocre DJ. If you don't put anything into it, then you're not really out there. But if you're giving it your all and playing the hottest records, your name gets attached to that.

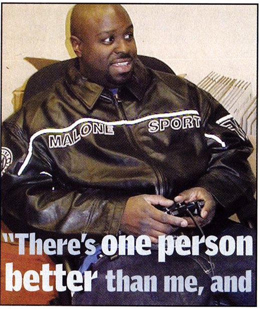
So, what has music given you that you wouldn't have otherwise?
I love it. I think why I've been so successful is that I'm not driven by money and fame. I love to DJ. I'm driven to DJ. And if I want to be in a room that has 2,000 or 3,000 people in it, then I have to keep doing this. I love being on the radio, too. The television thing is OK—it goes along with what I'm doing and helps me become national. And the albums help me stay national. But with radio, I love it. I'd do it for nothing.

Is radio cooler because it's all about the music?
It's like a playground. There's one person who does it better than me, and that's Howard Stern. You listen to Howard Stern and you can tell that he loves it, that he'd do it for nothing. I think that's the difference between people who are in it two years and people who are in it 20 years.

How important is it for a talented, young DJ to know you?
It's a good thing, but there are two sides to it. I'll meet a young DJ and a couple of years later he's doing his thing and he'll get cocky. He'll think Flex is getting old, saying he wants to play with me in a club. So I'll have to show him how it's going down. I like young talent. DJing is an art form and DJs are keeping it strong. The rules are changing a little bit with Napster—you don't have to go through the initiation of being a DJ.

Who are your role models?
I like Quincy Jones, Michael Jackson, Howard Stern, David Letterman. Michael Jordan. I like people who do more than one job, who do more than one thing. People who wear a lot of hats. Johnny Carson is very interesting to me. And Seinfeld. I like people who have mastered their craft. You can have Leno and Letterman, but it's all a small piece of Johnny Carson.

Have you gotten to meet all the people you've wanted to since you started doing this?
I've met a lot of people. I want to meet Gene Hackman because I'm a big fan of his. And I want to meet Howard Stern. I spoke to him on the phone, but I've never met him in person. Those are two people I'd really like to meet.



"There's one person who does [radio] better than me, and that's Howard Stern."

All those people "made it." Was there a time when you felt like you wouldn't make it?
I never had a barrier. In 1987 I was playing in a small barn in Mt. Vernon for $100 a night, and I made it then. That was making it for me. Everything else is just bigger. I just wanted to DJ and play music. If I can do it in a barroom, or I can do it for 4,000 people, I'm happy.

Who's your favorite rapper?
It's a combination. I'm a fan of KRS-One, not only because he's an MC, but he does a speaking tour. I like DMX for the artist and lyricist that he is. JayZee I like as a lyricist, too, but I like that he's one of the CEOs of his record label. Which means he's controlling his destiny. I'm a big fan of Ja Rule; he's 3 million sold—that'll probably go up to 4 million. I think he's what the game is going to be.

Have you seen *Exit Wounds*?
No. I'm not too much for rappers doing movies. I've done one and that was me playing myself judging a DJ contest. It's a Disney movie that comes out in a few months. But I'm not too much for it. I'm not too much for holding soft drinks either. Maybe I'd promote Burger King because I like it, but I'm not for people holding Mountain Dew or Sprite. If you're not really drinking it, don't do the ad. But it seems like everyone's doing these ads, to the point that you wonder who you'll see on the next Sprite commercial.

Who do you most respect in the music biz?
It's easy to respect Russel Simmons. But I also respect people who do radio stations across the country, along with MTV, BET, HBO. They're great outlets for music, for what's going on. There's lots of other channels on TV that don't support the music of young kids. I like the places I mentioned because they're innovative. I always looked up to *Source* magazine, too. I like things in the media that tell people what's going on.

What does a game like MTV Music Generator 2 do for music and for aspiring musicians?
I think it gives a kid the chance to be creative on his own. He gets to make sense of the sounds. Players will be making something that wasn't originally there. Maybe these kids can do it better than me. What if someone really enjoys doing this, taking time to piece things together? That could develop a kid's career. Maybe now he wants to get equipment or program or maybe he sings or raps to it. A lot of different talents can develop from that.

A Bit Of A Different Spin

The best of the rest from MTV Music Generator's second generation.

APOLLO FOUR FORTY

ZOMBIE NATION
Kernkraft 400

GORILLAZ

www.gorillaz.com

Gorillaz is as untraditional as it gets. A virtual band made up of characters (Murdoc, 2D, Noodle and Russel), they're actually fronted by Blur lead singer Damon Albarn and Tank Girl creator Jamie Hewlitt. But besides Albarn and Hewlitt, they're a mishmosh of fine musicians. In March, Gorillaz made a "live" appearance, which basically meant the four characters were featured on a big screen, interacting and playing music.

APOLLO 440

www.apollo440online.com

Fans of Sony's PS2 ATV Offroad Fury and Activision's PS one Spider-Man have already heard the stylings of Apollo 440. Remember that version of the Spider-Man theme song? They covered it. And their Music Generator 2 song, "Don't Stop the Rock," was nominated in the Best Dance Video category at the Billboard 2000 Annual Video Awards.

BENTLEY RHYTHM ACE

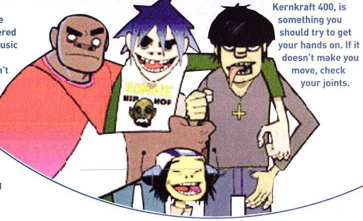
www.parlophone.co.uk/bentley/

The Bentleys—Michael Barrywhoosh and Barry Island—met in 1995. One was an unemployed road layer, the other was a bass player for Pop Will Eat Itself. They met at a party where Barrywhoosh was playing psychedelic pop tunes. "I was playing records and he really loved them. Then we nearly kissed. We didn't. So we made records instead. We were lonely." B.R.A. is beat-heavy, perverse, and has samples from all over the musical map. Since they came to America to tour in 1997, they've wowed and surprised with their madcap musical antics.

ZOMBIE NATION

www.zombiegeneration.org

As eccentric as they are talented, Zombie Nation is a mystery. Their Web site says that the band is ruled by "Gnork Zomb, who appears in publicity under the commercially bearable synonym Splank!" All we can figure is that their latest work, Kernkraft 400, is something you should try to get your hands on. If it doesn't make you move, check your joints.



True M.C.

The first MTV Music Generator was tight. You could waste days piecing together a mix, making it just right. But there was always a limit to what you could do. For one thing, you were confined to the samples within the game. Of all the things that make us tingle with creative anticipation about the sequel, there's one facet that makes for all kinds of sampling daydreams. The latest version will have a dedicated USB Sampling Hardware unit. What does that mean? Well, with both the adapter and a microphone set up, you can sample directly into the game, and that includes your own voice—or the banging of pots and pans together, if you want. You'll get CD-quality sampling (44.1 KHz) for 23 seconds per sample. You can then edit samples (slow them down, speed them up, cut them into parts). There's only one limitation: the space available on your memory card. As far as we know the microphone will cost $14.99. If anything changes, we'll be the first to tattle.

Illustration by Rob Clayton

INSIDE THE INDUSTRY:

VOICE ACTING

This article kicks off a periodic series exploring some of the lesser-known professions within the video game industry. We'll profile personalities from all segments of the industry, focusing on the interesting, the unusual or the just plain weird, offering you a behind-the-scenes look at the many facets of game design.

We got an interesting letter a few weeks back: "I just read Joe Rybicki's review of Shadow of Destiny from Konami, due out on PS2 this month. I'm the voice actor who played Eike, the main character. After I ruled out taking my own life (Joe was not kind), I thought perhaps you'd like to know what it's like from a voice actor's perspective." We were intrigued. As we continued to read, we learned more about voice acting than we ever expected to know. So we decided to dig a little deeper.

Scott Keck, in addition to Shadow of Destiny, also did voices for Z.O.E., Destruction Derby 64, Hybrid Heaven and Spawn for Game Boy. That's a pretty varied résumé in an industry that, on the whole, still sees voice work as secondary in importance to, well, just about anything else. Who can forget the immortally awful overacting of the original Resident Evil? But Keck cautions against judging voice actors too harshly; often they're merely following direction.

"Eighty-five percent of the time, when you get into the booth, the client will ask you to change what you're doing," says Keck, "because it doesn't match their 'idea' for the character. While I often disagree with the translations and try to offer polite suggestions for improvements, in the end, this is a job. We are basically here to do what the client asks us to do, to the best of our ability. You can suggest, you can fudge the characterization, but in the end, you gotta do it the way they tell you to. I am an avid gamer, besides being a voice actor, and yes, I have cringed at terrible dialogue. But I am a lot more sympathetic to what the actors are going through."

With this in mind, we asked Keck to outline the basic process of landing and executing a voice-over job:

Step One:
PRE-AUDITION

"Generally, when you arrive at an audition, they will have several items on hand.

"First, a character description, also known as a 'breakdown': usually a few lines describing the character: 'Zeke—a bad guy. He's high-strung and has a nervous chuckle. He was raised by wolves.'

"Sometimes they will have a sketch of the character—or, at least, what the character looked like a few months ago. During the creation process, game characters change looks, change sides, and sometimes, change sexes!

"About a third of the time, the game is already much further along in Japan. So, they will have tapes for each character. These are the Japanese voice actors, and you will frequently be asked to be the 'American' version, matching their pitch, tone, delivery and energy.

"There will also be 'sides'— what actors call the pages of script. This is usually one page, or a few paragraphs from different scenes, to show the character's range. You'll have anywhere from a few minutes to an hour to study the sides and try out different voices. If you're *really* lucky, there will be a couple paragraphs giving an overview of the game.

Step Two:
AUDITION

"Usually the company will ask you to change things around after they've heard you, often several times. Being able to take direction is key. If they see that you pay attention to what they say, and make the changes they want, they will know you're easy to work with. Lose the attitude; aim to please. Be on time, be polite, and be willing to try it as many different times as they ask you to."

> **"I was literally black and blue from throwing myself on the floor and making all kinds of sounds."**

Step Three:
DELIVERY

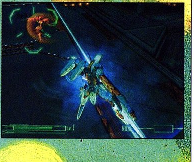
If you're lucky enough to land the job, prepare yourself for an unpredictable experience. There are times when the company will tell the voice actor to "just have fun with the part"—these tend to be the best and most rewarding experiences, says Keck. But often the experience is much more demanding.

"I don't think people know just how hard we work," Keck muses. "I've done games where I have had to record the sound of my character taking damage, or getting beaten up. I was literally black and blue from throwing myself on the floor and making all kinds of sounds. Also, try reading a full page of copy, 10 different times. Each time, the client asks you to change one thing—but it's a different thing each time. So, you change that one little thing, but you gotta read the rest of it *the same way* because they 'love what you're doing with the other copy.' That, my friends, is work."

And then there are the *really* tough jobs. "I think one of the worst things about my job is when you know you are doing a kick-ass character voice that is perfect for the game, and the client has you make a 180-degree turn—and then they love it and you hate it!

"Or even worse, you'll record tons of dialogue, only to find out that it didn't get into the game. Or the ultimate: Someone decided they didn't like you and they dumped all your tracks and hired another actor, who wound up doing the character the way you imagined it in the first place, before the client 'fixed' it!"

Scott Keck can be heard in a variety of venues. Check out his Web site at **www.localfool.com** *for further details.*



"...AN ABSOLUTE TRIUMPH - IT'S VERY LIKELY THE BEST PURE RACING GAME AVAILABLE ON DREAMCAST."

- Official Dreamcast Magazine

Dream Game Award
Official Sega Dreamcast Magazine

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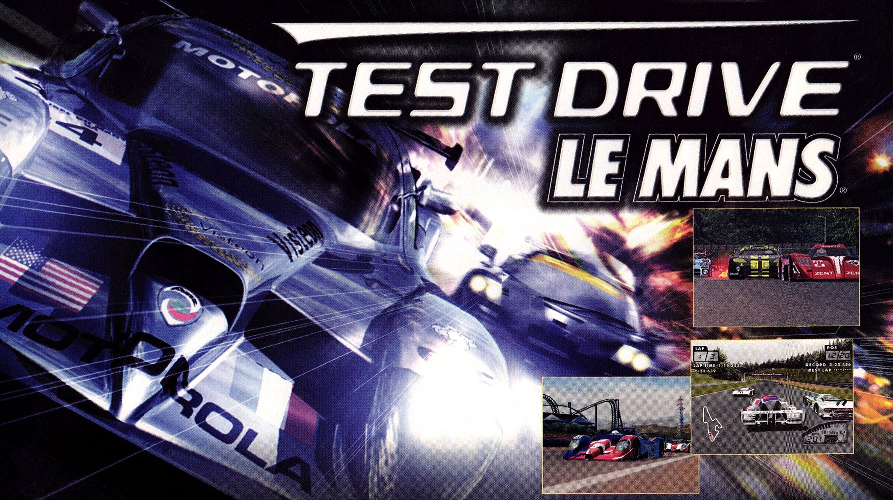

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DUDE! YOU'RE SO HARDCORE

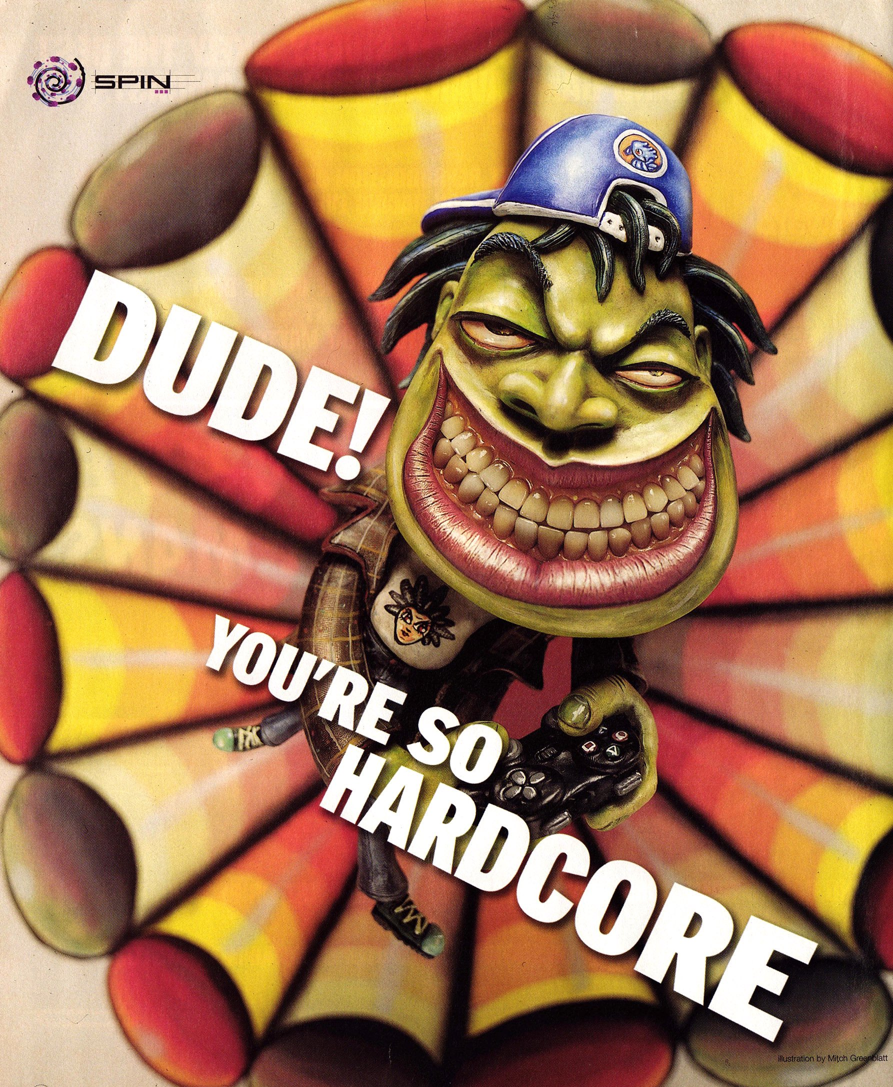
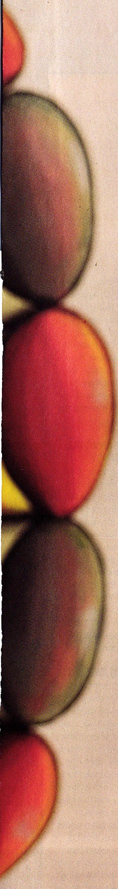


illustration by Mitch Greenblatt



Being "hardcore" is tougher than you'd think.
Here's our handy guide to proving you have what it takes.

Maybe you truly are a hardcore PlayStation gamer, or maybe you just aspire to be one. Can't hold your own in a conversation at your local import store? Don't know what the guy behind the counter at Babbage's is talking about? We can help you fake your way through and sound just like games journalists and so many other hardcore gamers. Just make sure you remember the following advice and you won't go wrong.

GAMES

The **MGS2 demo** isn't just a cool sample of a game...it's a **competitive sport** that pits hardcore gamers against each other in a **battle of pride** unlike anything you've ever experienced. A demo that can take up to an hour to complete if you just want to play it "normally" can be blasted through in a matter of minutes. This will eventually lead to two things: a) hardcore gamers gloating about their placement on the "Very Hard" ranking on the Konami Web site, and b) it will trigger the inevitable "MGS2 is going to be lame because the gameplay is just like the first one, and it's too short" claims. **Klonoa 2 is gorgeous**, but the truly hardcore are already bitching about the gameplay. It's basically a **very pretty,** very linear **platform game**. So it's just like the first one, then. Hopefully the new one will sell more than 38 copies, though, thus no longer making it a niche "hardcore" game. Maybe that's as much the reason for the complaints.

Onimusha may have been out for a couple of months now, and it's still a big seller. But, you're not truly hardcore until you've finished it in the **panda suit**.

The MGS2 demo is a competitive sport that pits hardcore gamers against each other in a battle of pride

It is absolutely imperative, while speaking of EA/Bullfrog's incredible job of converting **Quake III: Revolution**, to **bemoan the lack of USB mouse and keyboard support** at great length. The incredible implementation of the controls is irrelevant.

Dark Cloud isn't a Square RPG, so you'll have to decide if you're in the pro-Square or anti-Square hardcore camp.

While you're moaning about stuff, it's also worth mentioning that although **Z.O.E.** was a great game, it was **way too short** and that the voice-acting was terrible. You also need to mention that you're **sick of waiting for GT3** and you're disappointed that all of the tracks look like they're going to be the same as those in GT2.

Moaning about stuff is very important in order to appear hardcore. Although you love everything about games, it's important to retain an air of ambivalence toward pretty much anything except really obscure Japanese games that no one can pronounce properly. You're also obliged to **vehemently defend the delights of 2D games**, especially 2D fighting games. Tekken sucks. Remember that. And opinions are allowed to change without notice also. Tekken doesn't suck. OK?

GADGETS

The big one here is the **Game Boy Advance**. Although every sane person with a wish to be entertained is going to want one eventually, the truly **hardcore already have one**. If you're a really top-shelf hardcore gamer, and really smart, you hooked up with a pal who lives in Japan (all hardcore gamers have friends who live in Japan) and bought it the day it came out for the yen equivalent of $90. The next shelf down ordered one from an import store and got reamed for about $350 for a system and a couple of games. The game of choice is, of course, **Castlevania**, which is a true gamer's game. Comments to throw around to boost your credibility include "**Mario Advance looks lame**," "Rayman Advance is awesome," and "I have the blue one."

Other gadgets of note include the new **Palm m505**—which is basically the color version of the Palm Vx replacement. It's superthin, takes memory cards and add-ons, and is generally desirable. It's $449 and you can get one from www.palm.com. Any Palm device is cool these days, and the **Handspring Visor Deluxe/Platinum** is also worth a look. www.handspring.com

Those of you with a "phat" home entertainment system are obliged to invest $179 in the **Sony Remote Commander** (RM AV2100)—the universal remote to end all universal remotes. It's programmable, has a groovy LCD touch screen, **glows a fabulous blue color** and will impress, well, boys. www.sonystyle.com.

Phones are becoming more of a status symbol than ever, and the coming months will see some big changes. Right now, just about everyone is laying out the cash for one of those **tiny** Nokia phones, like the 8260. While they're all the rage now, by the end of the year there will be some fabulous gadgets available on the Sprint and Cingular services. Watch for ultra-fast mobile Internet devices using 3G technology before the summer. **What's 3G?** It's an **Internet connection faster than a cable modem in the palm of your hand**, that's what. If you can wait even longer, AT&T has hooked up with ITT DoCoMo in Japan (the service that you can link your PS one up to) and will be bringing iMode to the U.S. this year.

TOYS

By now you're probably running out of space to put all that **Simpsons stuff**, and many are no doubt thinking that it's time to stop investing. But it's absolutely essential that you purchase **Comic Book Store Guy and Frink** from www.thesimpsons.com.

You should also go to www.spawn.com and make sure you have a selection of McFarlane toys. No doubt you've already preordered your **Metal Gear Solid 2 toys**, but the Spawn classic series is also a good fallback, and the new Ash figures from Evil Dead will certainly up your cubicle cred. The truly hardcore will purchase everything in the "McFarlane's 3D Animation From Japan" range. So far this includes Tetsuo and Kaneda from Akira, Vash the Stampede from Trigun, and Ryoko from Tenchi Muyo. If these names mean nothing to you, you obviously don't know your anime. But that doesn't matter...investing in the toys will make others think you know what you're talking about.

MOVIES

First and foremost: You must, at all costs, make comments as to why the **Final Fantasy movie** would be so much better if it was being done in Japanese. Regardless of your feelings about acting greats like Donald Sutherland and Ving Rhames, you cannot, at any time, acknowledge that their considerable talents are suitable for the voice work in the movie. You can say anything you like about the **incredible visuals**, but you must retain an air of disdain when discussing plot, scripts, background or voices. Remember to snort derisively when anyone mentions that "this is the first Final Fantasy set on Earth."

The **Tomb Raider movie** no doubt has you at a loss. It's **bound to be lame**, but the justifiable excuse for wanting to **ogle at Angelina Jolie** is that it's probably "true to the game concept." This makes it perfectly OK to wish that she'd drop that towel. It also means that you're allowed to dig out the original Tomb Raider, play it again, and acknowledge that it was actually a good game. If you don't own it, you're not hardcore. So rush out and buy the Greatest Hits version and remember to tell people that you didn't buy it when it first came out because it was overcommercialized, and you only have it now to "complete your PS one collection."

MGS2 PROS

Play the demo, get the code and log it on www.kcej.com. The scores are damned impressive, but Kojima recently mentioned that some of these are from cheaters. That's not very hardcore of them now, is it?

METAL GEAR SOLID 2
NORTH AMERICA

VERY EASY

Jim_Mazurek 94545
Radar Type: OFF
Damage Rate: 0
Total Play Time: 0h01m51s
Enemies Killed: 0
Bullets Fired: 3
Continues: 0 Alert Mode: 0

EASY

Jim_Mazurek 94545
Radar Type: OFF
Damage Rate: 0
Total Play Time: 0h01m51s
Enemies Killed: 0
Bullets Fired: 3
Continues: 0 Alert Mode: 0

MEDIUM

Test 94590
Radar Type: TYPE 1
Damage Rate: 4
Total Play Time: 0h01m29s
Enemies Killed: 0
Bullets Fired: 28
Continues: 0 Alert Mode: 0

HARD

Jim_Mazurek 93305
Radar Type: OFF
Damage Rate: 0
Total Play Time: 0h02m17s
Enemies Killed: 0
Bullets Fired: 4
Continues: 0 Alert Mode: 0

VERY HARD

FNG 93430
Radar Type: OFF
Damage Rate: 0
Total Play Time: 0h01m53s
Enemies Killed: 1
Bullets Fired: 4
Continues: 0 Alert Mode: 0

Clish MacLaver Gossip Gossip

Gossip, rumor and scandal. Gaming's biggest secrets dug up and served with gravy.

Games industry gatherings are always the best places for juicy info, and this month I attended two. First the Game Developers Conference in San Jose, where the world's finest gather to geek out about technology and talk about the future. Later, I jetted to the Tokyo Game Show, where I talked young Sam Kennedy into drinking too much sake, then listened in while drunken game execs, far away from home, spilled the beans on their coming wares.

ANOTHER DARK CLOUD ON THE HORIZON

This month's cover game is one of the year's big surprises and will hopefully go a long way to filling the RPG void on the PS2 before Final Fantasy X appears in the fall. Although the game didn't perform terribly well in Japan, developer Level-5 is already hard at work on a much more ambitious sequel. Details are sketchy, but we hear that the game will get a graphical overhaul and a more methodical dungeon system. Maybe we'll get to find out why the thing is called Dark Cloud, too.

TWISTED METAL: BLACK ONLINE?

If this one turns out to be true, chances are you'll be reading about it online soon after this issue of *OPM* hits the newsstands. I've no idea how sturdy the foundations are to this particular snippet of gossip, but I'm informed by a reliable source that Twisted Metal: Black will include a network mode for up to eight players. Sony CEA is expected to announce all of its Internet plans on May 16, and I've heard that TMB may be mentioned at the same time. Keep your eye on the news on www.playstationmagazine.com for more information.

NO MORE BOUNCING FROM DREAM FACTORY

Were you as disappointed with The Bouncer as the rest of us? Well, guess what? Even the developer, Dream Factory, was pretty pissed off with the way it turned out. Why? On a recent trip to Japan I spent some time talking with the DF bunch. They informed me that the game was a giant embarrassment for them and that the reason it turned out so poorly was that Square stepped in midway through development and completely changed how the game was to be. Astute readers of *OPM* might remember that when The Bouncer was originally announced it was said to be an all-action Final Fight-ish game, and that there would be plenty of interaction with environments and lots of spectacular brawls. Well, that's what the game was originally supposed to be like, but then Square intervened and tossed away many of those ideas. Because of this the two companies (who've worked together on other projects too, like Tobal) no longer have a relationship.

PS2 IS STILL NAMCO'S FAVORITE

Heard that Namco will soon be making products for GameCube and Xbox? Well, fear not, PlayStation fans, as Namco's favorite is still the PS2, and looks set to remain that way. PS2 is where the world will see Soul Calibur 2, Tekken 4 and Ridge Racer 6 *first*. In fact, chances are Namco Japan won't even be doing the conversion work for the other systems. Instead, some are being handled by the U.S. branch and some are being shopped out to external developers. The main teams at Namco of Japan are all gung-ho on the PS2, and hopefully we'll be able to bring you pictures from the fruits of their labors at some point in the next couple of months. Hands up who can't wait for Soul Calibur 2. Check out Hollywood Banter this month for news on the movie as well.

EVEN MORE SEGA TITLES ON THE WAY FOR PS2

While the list of Sega titles to be released on the PS2 grows longer almost every week, I've heard of a few interesting ones lately. Metropolis Street Racer, which is currently being ported to the Xbox as "Project Gotham," is a hot tip for a winter release, as well as Headhunter, which bears a striking resemblance to Metal Gear Solid. There's also word that the much-respected Ecco the Dolphin could be with us by the end of the year, complete with its awesome soundtrack and environmental ideals.

The big stuff that'll really get you tingling with excitement, though, are the games that are still shrouded in secrecy and met with nudges and winks whenever I bring them up with Sega execs. First up, the sports games are more than likely making the hop to PS2, with NFL 2K2 tipped to be the first to arrive, going head to head with Madden NFL 2002 this fall. Later, and maybe even before Christmas, I've heard rumblings that we'll be blessed with the simply awesome Sonic Adventure 2. Find a Dreamcast-owning friend and demand that he show you the demo that came with Phantasy Star Online. Beyond that, ports of Jet Grind Radio Future, Crazy Taxi 2 and Panzer Dragoon seem more than likely, along with a hotly tipped new addition to the much-loved Shinobi franchise. A lot of this is still very much speculation, but with Sega's shift in focus it seems unlikely that they'll ignore the most dominant console system when it comes to the big franchises.

HOLLYWOOD BUZZ ABOUT ALL THINGS FINAL FANTASY

It seems the spectacle of the *Final Fantasy* movie has provoked some interest in video games in general among the rich and glamorous fraternity. My contacts in Hollywood tell me that Tinseltown's finest are lining up for the chance to be the English-speaking voices in Final Fantasy X. We'll have some confirmed news on this next month, I hope. Who would you like to see? Let us know—e-mail your ideas to **OPM@ziffdavis.com**

EVERQUEST LOOKS AWESOME

I have it on good authority that the PS2 version of the wildly popular Sony online game looks incredible on PS2, having undergone a major cosmetic overhaul. To quote one industry insider, the PC game "is boring as hell and looks like s**t," and yet zillions of people still log on every day to experience the fantasy world. Development has been under way for some considerable time, I hear. "It's weird that we've been working on a network game without knowing what the f*****g network plans are," I overheard someone say at a party at the Game Developers Conference. Expect more news when we report back from E3 in May.

RUMOR MILL

Grandia 2 is definitely PS2 bound, I hear. The game should hit the Sony platform by this winter in Japan and sometime in 2002 in the U.S. • A new Ultimate Fighting Championship game is currently in development and will be out before the end of the year. • Another Tokyo Xtreme Racer is in development, for those of you who like that sort of thing. • Konami is going to release Dance Dance Revolution Disney Mix on PS one in the U.S. • Watch out for a squad-based online combat game for PS2 tentatively referred to simply as Navy SEALS. • A number of companies are already in talks with id Software to get the rights for a PS2 port of Doom III.

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PlayStation®2

TEEN
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CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Blood
Violence

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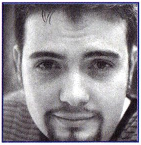
JOHN DAVISON

IN THE FUTURE WE'LL ALL DRIVE FLYING CARS



Boffins have been saying this for as long as I can remember. The 21st century was supposed to be all about meals in pill form, robots that cleaned up after you and *flying cars.* None of it's happened, so all those people who said "this is what the future is all about" didn't really have a clue what they were talking about. So take what I'm saying here with as big of a pinch of salt as you like, but there's reason to the madness that follows.

Ever since Nolan Bushnell discovered that you can make rather a lot of money out of this video games lark, the industry has been striving to become "more mainstream." It's something I've heard people go on and on and on about for as long as I can remember, and yet despite sales figures racking up in the tens of millions for some franchises, video games are always described as "for kids" by TV talking heads and politicians alike.

So is it ever going to become accepted as "real" entertainment? How many PlayStations have to be sold before game design is considered *art?* Having spent some time with a number of well-respected brainiacs at the recent Game Developers Conference, it seems that the way to infiltrate the minds of the masses is to "make it so they don't realize they're playing a game at all." While the part of the games industry that we get all excited about now will continue to make bigger and better games with sexier technology, another style of game will evolve.

The term "interactive entertainment" has been wantonly bandied about for years, but it seems as if the true mass appeal of game content is going to evolve from ideas other than those with their roots in arcade technology. Ideas like EA.com's Majestic will get people excited about being a part of an interesting story without requiring them to demonstrate hand-eye coordination or any kind of physical dexterity. This new style of game plays more with people's emotions by getting inside their heads than titillating them with funky visuals. The majority of people "get" being angry, or scared, or happy, or horny. But they don't "get" why Lara Croft can't leap up and grab that ledge when it looks perfectly obvious that she should be able to. This is why this new type of experience will infiltrate the minds of the masses and help elevate video games to where they truly belong.

Once the PS2 becomes a "network device" it will be a major factor in this phenomenon. Sure, the Final Fantasies and Metal Gears will continue to develop and no doubt benefit from this new interest in gaming, but people like, say, my mom still aren't going to give two hoots about wiping out the hairy-armpit chick in MGS2 with only four shots. Mom will be interested in a story that she can become a part of. Something that draws her in, plucks on her heartstrings—*entertains her*—but without requiring her to display joypad prowess. The "hardcore" among us will no doubt deride this idea as just a load of smelly old crap, but if the designers I spoke with are right, we're going to see gaming change considerably over the next five years.

Or maybe not. My car still doesn't fly, and there don't seem to be any indications that it's going to anytime soon. But I believe that it will *someday.*

PLAYSTATION APTITUDE TEST

Think you know your PlayStation games? Take the PlayStation Aptitude Test (PSAT) each month and see how good you really are.

1. Which classic EA game will also be included with Madden NFL 2002?
a. John Madden Football
b. John Madden Football '93
c. Madden NFL '94
d. Mutant League Football

2. KISS Pinball brings Gene Simmons and pals to PS one. Which of these other rock bands has had its own console pinball game (think Genesis)?
a. Motley Crüe
b. Aerosmith
c. Guns n' Roses
d. Green Jelly

3. In which of the following games does a guitar *not* play a prominent role?
a. Guitar Freaks
b. Ephemeral Fantasia
c. Rising Zan
d. Gitaroo-man

4. What popular comic-book personality has contributed to the development of Rune: Viking Warlord?
a. Todd McFarlane
b. Jim Lee
c. Rob Leifeld
d. Stan Lee

5. Which of the following is not considered a "working title" for a game in our Previews section?
a. BASS Fishing
b. Saiyuki: The Journey West
c. Yanya Caballista featuring Gawoo
d. Herdy Gerdy

6. Which one of these Bad Religion albums does not include a song featured in Crazy Taxi?
a. *The Gray Race*
b. *Stranger Than Fiction*
c. *Recipe for Hate*
d. *No Substance*

7. Contrary to popular belief, Escape From Monkey Island is not the first console outing for the Monkey Island series. What was?
a. The Secret of Monkey Island (Super NES)
b. The Secret of Monkey Island (Sega CD)
c. The Curse of Monkey Island (Sega Saturn)
d. The Curse of Monkey Island (PS one)

8. Which artist was featured in the commercials for the first MTV Music Generator?
a. Moby
b. DJ Scribble
c. Funkmaster Flex
d. Kool Moe Dee

9. Cinemaware, the company that is rereleasing Defender of the Crown on the PS2, was responsible for which other classic PC game?
a. The Three Stooges
b. King's Quest II: Romancing the Throne
c. Chris Roberts' Movie Maker
d. Starflight

10. Counting every game that's been announced, how many Army Men games exist on PS one or PS2?
a. 6
b. 9
c. 11
d. 13

Answers
1. b **2.** a **3.** c **4.** a **5.** d
6. c **7.** b **8.** b **9.** a **10.** d

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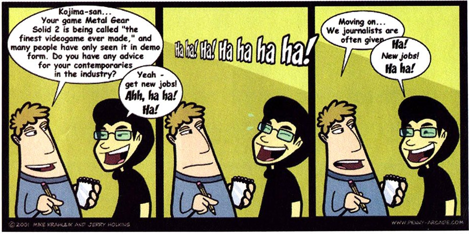
Kojima-san... Your game Metal Gear Solid 2 is being called "the finest videogame ever made," and many people have only seen it in demo form. Do you have any advice for your contemporaries in the industry?
Yeah - get new jobs! Ahh, ha ha! Ha!
Ha ha! Ha! Ha ha ha ha!
Moving on... We journalists are often given
Ha! New jobs! Ha ha!
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FAST TALKER

PlayStation-sponsored Troy Bayliss lets his performance speak for itself

Troy Bayliss is a man of few words. It's not surprising: On the Superbike circuit there's hardly time to think, much less talk. The "Wonder from Down Under" seems to prefer to let his stats speak for him—and speak loudly.

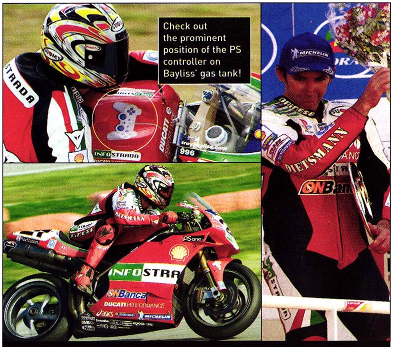
Bayliss began racing early in life. Really early. At the age of 10 he was competing in motocross events, though at 14 he decided he'd had enough of the dirt and moved on to more personal pursuits. At the age of 23, he returned to motorsports, this time in the street bike circuit. Soon he was racing all over his native Australia—and winning. In fact, in 1996 he placed third in his first showing at the Australian Superbike Championship. The following year he placed second, and decided to take the next step. So, that same year he entered the Phillips Island World Superbike Grand Prix, and finished an impressive sixth.

As a result of this, in 1998 he received an offer to compete in the gruelling British Superbike Championship, riding Team GSE's Ducati. He placed eighth that year, but followed up with a first-place finish in 1999. The following year he moved to the World Superbike Championship, finishing sixth following a legendary battle under adverse weather conditions in Assen, Holland. He wiped out that day, but displayed his incredible prowess to all, and left no doubt in the minds of observers that Troy Bayliss would prove a force to be reckoned with.

Now, Bayliss races for the Ducati factory team (sponsored in part by PlayStation), and as of this writing is placed second in the World Superbike Championship season. But none of these accolades have damaged Bayliss' seemingly unshakable reserve. We asked Troy about his scariest moments on the track. His response? "Never had one." A similarly easygoing, down-to-earth answer greets our question about his favorite track: "I don't have one. I like most of them." And with regard to personal heroes, he says only, "Many riders have inspired me over the years."

Bayliss proves a bit more exuberant when we mention his PlayStation sponsorship. "My son and I play all the time. I love Driver, and Rayman is a family favorite." Interestingly, though, he's never tried Ducati World Racing Championship, MotoGP, or really any other superbike game. Apparently, he just likes to save up his racing for the "real" competitions.

We'd say it's working.



Check out the prominent position of the PS controller on Bayliss' gas tank!

photos courtesy of Ducati

Bayliss is characteristically nonchalant about his team's WSB chances. "It's a strong lineup," he says. "We should always have some rider on the podium."

HOLLYWOOD BANTER

Judd as Catwoman

Word has it that Ashley Judd has signed on to play the role of Catwoman in an upcoming film featuring the character.

According to *Variety,* Judd will take the title role in a fast-developing Catwoman movie at Warner Bros. No further details have been revealed as yet, particularly regarding who might direct the coming film, but we're certainly looking forward to seeing Ms. Judd in that tight black suit.

This now puts the tally for Batman-related films at three. Previously Darren Aronofsky (*Requiem for a Dream*) was given the go-ahead to write the script for *Batman: Year One*. Meanwhile, director Boaz Yakin (*Remember the Titans*) is currently at work developing the live-action movie version of the *Batman Beyond* animated TV series.

www.variety.com

X-Men 2 Update

While talking to *Comics2Film*, Marvel's Kevin Feige addressed a number of recent rumors regarding *X-Men 2*. The main rumor going around, as you may know, suggests that Beast and the Sentinels would be in the next film, but Gambit was being held back. On this, Feige says "there are no definites. Everything's been discussed. We've got 30 years of history, thousands of books and hundreds of characters. So, we're figuring it all out."

www.comics2film.com

T3 Gets Director

According to *Variety, U-571* director Jonathan Mostow is in negotiations to take on the long-developing *Terminator 3* project. Production is likely to start as soon as the threatened writers and actors strikes are settled or averted. The paper reports that Mostow had met with Arnold Schwarzenegger for "several strong meetings." *Terminator 3*'s story is said to set up the events that topple the world into war with Skynet and its army of robotic destroyers. The script, written by Tedi Sarafian, will reportedly feature an indestructible female terminator that will battle it out with Arnold.

www.variety.com

Hollywood Sammo

Sammo Hung (*Martial Law*, many Jackie Chan movies) will be directing *Soul Calibur*, based on Namco's fabulous game. There isn't much information available yet since the agreement between the producers and Namco was signed on March 29, but we have learned that the budget will be around a very respectable $50 million. With the game's medieval setting, shooting will probably take place in Eastern Europe and China. The film should have an international cast to reflect the global popularity of the game. Hopefully this film will get Jackie Chan and Yuen Biao involved in some capacity—a reunion of sorts. Rhythm & Hues will more than likely be the CG effects house for the project because of its relationship with Namco. Shooting is planned for late summer/early fall 2001. U.S. release is planned for summer 2002.

www.soulcalibur.com
www.sammohung.com

Bakula on New Trek?

Maybe they're just passing along an older rumor, or maybe they know something new. The Canadian edition of *TV Guide* is reporting that *Quantum Leap* star Scott Bakula (you would've also seen him in *American Beauty* as one of the gay neighbors) has been signed to the coming fifth Star Trek TV series. Given how close the project is to ramping up, it will be sooner rather than later when we find out if this Bakula casting info is the real deal.

Dorn Talks Trek X Movie

Michael Dorn (Worf) touched upon a number of points regarding the coming *Star Trek X* production at a recent convention. *Cinescape* magazine contributor J. Rentilly reported that Dorn spoke of the coming production, saying, "There's going to be lots of fighting and dying in the new movie. *Gladiator*'s John Logan is writing, and it's going to be amazing. If there's not a strike, we'll do the movie right away. If there is a strike, we'll push it to, like, October, they say—which is right about when I'll be out of money." As for who might helm the movie, Dorn says, "If anybody from the cast is going to direct the new movie, it'll be Levar (Burton). He's got a lot of credits now. He'll do a great job, and we can tease him mercilessly—especially Patrick (Stewart)."

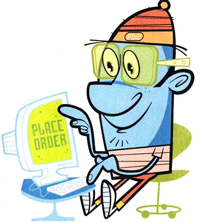
Dorn also addressed the one-time romantic connection between Worf and Deanna Troi, saying, "There won't be a relationship between Worf and Deanna (in *Trek X*). They've let go of that, even though I like it; it's like Beauty and the Beast." Dorn added that there's a rumor that Troi and Riker will be tying the knot in the next film.

Duke Nukem and The Rock

Video game characters continue to infiltrate all other aspects of media, as we learned this month that Dimension Films has secured the rights to Duke Nukem. Nukem has long been rumored as a potential movie franchise, and now it seems likely that we could see the alien-busting tough guy hit theaters as soon as next year as part of a huge multimedia push on the franchise in 2002. Although not yet confirmed, rumored talks between Dimension and WWF favorite The Rock are said to be going extremely well, with both sides committed to making something work. Young Dwayne may be the perfect choice for the role—but let's just hope he keeps the eyebrow movement down to a minimum. Babes, big guns and general R-rated goodness seem to be inevitable.

Steve Granitz/WireImages.com

ALIEN NESS / ROCKSTEADY CREW, NYC
0.3.
APPAREL CREATED BY THE ECKŌ MINDLABS
WWW.PHYS-SCI.COM
PHYS.SCI.™
PHYSICAL SCIENCE / APPAREL COMPANY



BUYING PS2 GAMES ONLINE

Before you decide to buy PlayStation games online, take a look at what we learned while putting six top sites through the wringer

amazon.com

amazon.com
PlayStation.2
Looking for PlayStation2?
Our Top Sellers

Toys "R" Us has teamed up with amazon.com, making the biggest shopping site on the Web even bigger. Is this a good thing? It probably doesn't hurt. They do only seem to allow preorders on the bigger titles. For other games and back-ordered merchandise, they don't let you order it immediately; instead they'll send you an e-mail when the item is available. This happened to us with ATV and Fear Effect. We did receive the e-mails stating they were in stock within a couple days, and we ordered them straight from the e-mail They didn't get Zone of the Enders to us until about a week after it was released. That's unfortunate because, if you took the time to preorder a game, it's because you want to make sure it's in your mitts ASAP.

bestbuy.com

BEST BUY .com
Video Games... PS2

Last Christmas season was the first in which bestbuy.com was ready to showcase their Internet muscle. Well, they had better bulk up at the gym a little more. It was a disastrous holiday for them. They were overwhelmed with the volume of orders and their Web site crashed over Thanksgiving weekend, leaving a lot of disappointed consumers. Things seem to have settled down since then; we had no trouble logging on to the site. One unique feature they offer is that you can pick up and take back your purchase to a Best Buy store location, saving you the cost of shipping. We tested this and found it was more of a hassle than it was worth. We had to wait in a long line at the Returns desk and then wait longer while they figured out how to handle a Web site purchase. Their prices do correspond to their Sunday circular, though, and there are usually some good deals to be found. They did have some trouble shipping the games. We received ATV about a month after ordering. About that same time, we received an e-mail saying they had cancelled our Fear Effect order since it was back-ordered for so long. Also, as soon as Z.O.E came out, our order went from the preorder list to back-order, and hasn't been heard from yet.

buy.com

half.com exchange
BUY and SELL previously owned MUSIC and MOVIES
buy.com
In The Zone
Zone of the Enders

Three cheers for the site that broke ranks by pricing PS2 games lower than $49.99. Take one cheer back for the site that priced Fear Effect higher than $39.99. Take another back for charging $3.25 shipping per game ordered. That leaves one cheer left for decent, reliable service—especially for providing us with weekly e-mails keeping us apprised of our outstanding orders. Their stuff didn't arrive the fastest, but at least it did arrive. Which is more than you can say for some of these other sites.

ebgames.com

ebgames.com
PlayStation 2
new releases
must haves

If you can't get to your friendly neighborhood Electronics Boutique to pick up the latest PS2 game, ebgames.com is the next best thing. Are you afraid you won't secure a copy of Woody Woodpecker's Racing when it comes to the PS2 this November? Have no fear, you can preorder it and about a hundred other titles in their thorough Coming Soon section. The titles will get to you amazingly fast since they use FedEx two-day delivery as their standard service. We received Zone of the Enders the day it was released in stores. ATV Offroad Fury and Fear Effect didn't arrive quite so fast since they were out of stock. When we inquired about the back-order, they were extremely helpful and courteous on the phone. One drawback to ebgames.com, however, is their return policy. The customer-service representative said we were not able to return products to an Electronics Boutique store. We asked a former store manager about this. He said that was the company

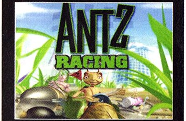
Overall Impressions

There weren't many deals to be found. All the stores stayed around $49.99 for the PS2 titles and $39.99 for Fear Effect 2. These are pretty much the same prices you'd pay in stores. And don't forget, that's without tacking on the sales tax and shipping costs. With all that, the cost of ordering a PS2 title could easily escalate to almost $60. Our advice is to comparison shop and be on the lookout for coupons, easily found at sites like slickdeals.net and dailyfreebies.com. Below is a breakdown of how much we were set back:

Web site	ZOE	ATV	FE2	Do I have to pay Tax?	Basic Shipping/Rates
amazon.com	49.99	49.99	39.99	Only in rainy WA.	ground/$3.49 plus $.99 per item
bestbuy.com	49.99	49.99	39.99	Yup, all 50 states pay The Man	ground/$2 plus .99 per item
buy.com	47.99	47.99	41.99	If you live in CA, IN and MA	ground/$3.25 per game
ebgames.com	49.99	49.99	39.99	If you live in NV or PA	2 day/$4.99 under $75; $6.99 over
express.com	48.99	49.99	39.99	Only in sunny CA.	ground/$.99 plus $.95 per item
gamestop.com	49.99	49.99	39.99	If there is a store in your state	2 day/5.99 up to $75, add $.75 for each additional $75

DATA STREAM

Antz on Wheels



Empire Interactive is developing a new kart racing game for the PS2 based on the movie *Antz*. The title, releasing in fall, allows you to race as all of the major *Antz* characters as they search for a new place to live.

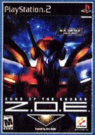
New Danger Zone

Titus has informed us that its Top Gun game for the PS2 is still on target. The game, which we'll show you next issue, is now slated to release this November.

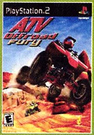
E.T. Phones Sony

NewKidCo is planning to make E.T. The Extra Terrestrial's console comeback a strong one with multiple releases on the PlayStation platforms. This October, E.T. will star in a new PS one title called E.T.: Interplanetary Adventure. And then next year he (it?) will return with two releases on the PS2—E.T.: Return to the Green Planet in March and E.T. & The Cosmic Garden in July. No going home yet, E.T.!

The Test Subjects



As the preordered copies of Zone of the Enders arrived from the Web sites, all the *OPM* editors were asking to have one. Sadly, they all had to be returned.



ATV Offroad Fury became such a surprise hit that the e-tailers were caught unaware. Only one store had this puppy in stock when we ordered.

PlayStation
fear effect 2

We think that Eidos' subtle hint at lesbianism in their ads helped spur Fear Effect 2 sales. Some of the stores had trouble getting it in stock to send to us.

policy, but he personally returned online orders if they had a valid shipping statement. One reason for this policy might be to help the consumer avoid paying sales tax. The law states that if a company has a store or office in the state that the item is being purchased, you have to pay that state's sales tax. By setting ebgames.com up as a separate entity, you only have to pay tax if you live in Nevada or Pennsylvania (where their bases of operation are located). This helps cover the higher cost for the quicker shipping.

express.com

express.com

Everything seems to be business as usual at express.com. After you order, however, you start to feel like Charlie Brown waiting for his Valentines to arrive—they just never seem to come. When we ran our story about buying DVD's online back in December, we mentioned that everything seemed to be delayed. Well, almost two months have gone by since we placed our games order and they have yet to deliver *any* goods. Worse yet, they didn't send an e-mail updating us of their status. We inquired why nothing has been shipped. They responded as follows: "We have been experiencing delays in acquiring product recently." No kidding. Maybe it's because, according to some Internet reports, they filed for bankruptcy in March. Their Web site states that they are currently upgrading our operating system to improve our service. We would suggest avoiding them.

gamestop.com

GameStop
PLAYSTATION 2
$179.94
$799.87
$179.94
$49.99
$42.99
$49.99

If you've ever shopped at Babbage's or Software etc. then you are probably aware of gamestop.com, their online presence. Unlike ebgames, gamestop lets you return product to their stores. That also means you have to pay a sales tax. Again, like ebgames, they feel the need to use FedEx two-day service as their lowest delivery option. Once you add the cost of tax along with higher shipping, we paid almost $60 for a $49.99 game. They were the only store that did not have any back-ordered product, so everything arrived *tout de suite*. Another minor drawback is that they don't seem to offer the preorder premiums that you can find in their stores. So if you are a collector of Final Fantasy paraphernalia, we suggest going into the store to order FFX for PS2.

illustrations by Chip Wass

COUPLES WHO PLAY TOGETHER, STAY TOGETHER

This month's *OPM* couple train stopped in Fort Campbell, KY, where Lusian, 22, lives with his wife Alexis, 32. They have three children: Sean, Zachary and Sydney (pictured below). Here's what they had to say:

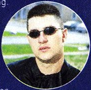
Has gaming enhanced your relationship?
Lusian: Yeah. It brings us closer together. But if she told me to choose between her and games, then she'd be packing her bags.
Alexis: Believe it or not, gaming has given us so many wonderful nights together.

Who wins more often?
Lusian: I always win. Flawless.
Alexis: He does. He's the "Zen Master" of all things PlayStation.

If you were making a game, what kind of game would you make?
Lusian: The high school first-person shooter. If they're going to blame games, let's give them something to really blame.
Alexis: I'd make an RPG. I love getting lost in the stories.

Does bedroom activity have a place in your gaming relationship?
Lusian: Sure. We have a PS one in our room. It's always a great thing after sex.
Alexis: It's definitely started a few interesting nights.

How do you think sexuality is represented in games?
Lusian: I think they're too tight on all that, but Fear Effect 2 is a good step. All games need to go along those lines. It's a big deal in a game if they kiss? Come on.
Alexis: It took eight FF's before people kissed. But it's changing.



You have 35 busted PS ones and lots of string, what would you make?
Lusian: If you break 35 PS ones, you have issues.
Alexis: I'd build the Eiffel Tower. What else?

Lusian's faves: Final Fantasy series, Resident Evil Series, Oni

Alexis' faves: Fear Effect series, Final Fantasy Tactics, Tomb Raider

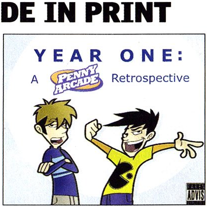
Can't wait for: Metal Gear Solid 2, Twisted Metal Black, Soul Reaver 2, FFX, Dark Cloud, Castlevania

photography by Dean Curtis

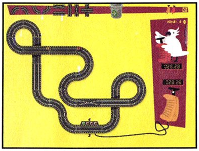
WE WANT YOU!

If you play PlayStation games with your sweetie, we want to hear from you! Send us a letter telling us a little more about you and your gaming experiences together. If you are lucky you may find your ugly mugs and gaming story in our magazine. If you're going to send a pic, only send duplicates; materials cannot be returned due to the volume of letters we get. Send stuff to OPM Couples c/o Ziff-Davis Media Inc., PO Box 3338, Oak Brook, IL, 60522-3338, or e-mail us: OPM@ziffdavis.com. If you're selected as the Couple of the Month you'll get a free game along with notoriety!

PENNY ARCADE IN PRINT



Our friends over at Penny Arcade were kind enough to give us an early look at their first honest-to-God, real-life book. *Year One: A Penny Arcade Retrospective* should be available by the time you read this, in two formats: hardcover, for approximately $32, and softcover, approximately $16. We'll offer a review as soon as we can get our hands on it, but until then, a warning: Have napkins handy. For the milk. You know, coming out of your nose. Visit www.kiwepublishing.com/bookpages/pennyinfo.html for details.



Bookmarks

www.tv4.se/lattjo/kojan/bilbanan.asp
Build your own slot-car racing set, then race against the computer or a friend! This rocks.

www.darkcloud.com
It's "coming soon" as we write this. Maybe by now you can actually find out just what the hell it is.

www.gouranga.com
The ultimate site for Grand Theft Auto fans.

www.cinemaware.com
Read about the second coming of Cinemaware, and play Shockwave versions of classic games.

www.leatherfacts.com/pelts.htm
They boast having New York's largest selection of leather products. With 91 varieties of pig suede, we'll take their word for it.

www.unicyclesource.com/
Q. Gary, do you like unicycles?
A. Duh! Who doesn't?

www.smartt.com/~brianp/
Without doubt, the best site for someone in need of a good llama trainer. They also help alpacas.

nohomers.net
Think you like the Simpsons? You have no idea how obsessive these people are. We are indeed grateful.

home.earthlink.net/~macami/index.htm
You'll never eat a Chalupa the same way ever again.

slate.msn.com/Features/bushisms/bushisms.asp
Every slip of the president's tongue is recorded and logged here for all to snicker at.

www.mcsweeneys.net
Todd's latest "life-long" dream came true when his work appeared on McSweeney's.

www.zefrank.seastrom.com/invite/index.html
Don't know how to "stir the pot" or "ride the pony"? Frank has painstakingly re-created all these classic dancing moves for your education.

www.mp3.com/meproject
www.mp3.com/jhg
Music from two of your favorite *OPM* editors.

Blockbuster Awards

At the Blockbuster Awards this past April, Tony Hawk was on hand to accept the trophy for Favorite PlayStation Game, given to Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2. Other winners include Driver 2 for overall Favorite Video Game and Madden NFL 2001 for Favorite PlayStation 2 game. The winners were chosen by a public vote. For a list of all the other awards, head over to www.blockbuster-awards.com.

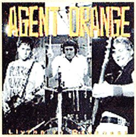
FOX
BLOCKBUSTER

Tony Hawk photo by Steve Granitz/Wireimage.com

Sound Station

By John Scalzi

This month's musical manifesto includes songs from MTV Music Generator 2, Test Drive Off-Road: Wide Open, and the sonic delight that is Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX.



Agent Orange: *Living in Darkness*

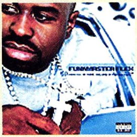
Posh Boy/Rhino Records
Featured In: Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX
An excellent example of first-generation California punk. The album sounds like it was whipped together in three days (which it was): Guitars, bass, and drums ram together in that thrashy way that indicates punky exuberance and/or a doubtful mastery of one's musical instrument, and Mike Palm's lyrics have all the angstful alienation you could ever want. Plus, this CD version includes eight extra tracks beyond the original LP.

Final Score ●●●●

The B-52's: *The B-52's*

Warner Brothers Records
Featured In: Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX
The high-pitched squeals, the droning, nasal tones—and that's just Ricky Wilson's guitar. Throw in Fred Schneider's talky singing and the twin sirens of Kate Pierson and Cindy Wilson, and you come to the inescapable conclusion that no other band has ever sounded like the B-52's. Their debut album is the band at its best: punky staccato drums and guitar, spacey lyrics, and the overwhelming drive to dance this mess around.

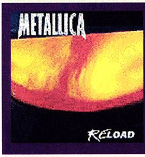
Final Score ●●●●●



Funkmaster Flex: *60 Minutes of Funk, Volume IV*

Loud Records
Featured In: MTV Music Generator 2
An excellent sonic bed on this album, so all credit to Funkmaster Flex on that score, but otherwise *Volume IV* only furthers my theory that if the "F" word, the "MF" word and the "N" word were erased from human memory, 80% of rap music would by necessity have to go with it. The one song without any notable swear words—the soulful groove "Goodlife"—is by far the best, and the rest of the album is angry rappers shouting crap. Pass.

Final Score ●●



Metallica: *Reload*

Electra Records
Featured In: Test Drive Off-Road: Wide Open
Probably their weakest studio album, but the fact that it still rocks better than most hard-rock albums in the last decade says much about a.) how good Metallica really is, and/or b.) how lame hard rock has been for the last decade. They also branch out, bringing in both violins and Marianne Faithful to stretch their own envelope. Napster brats may disdain the band, but please. When you want rock, you know where to go.

Final Score ●●●◖

Outkast: *Stankonia*

Arista Records
Featured In: Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX
One of the best-reviewed albums of 2000, possibly because it's got more going on than just the "hostile rapper" thing—which it has too, mind you, as the tune "Gangsta Sh*t" will let you know right away. But then you also have "Ms. Jackson," which has a guy trying to do right by his kid, and "Toilet Tisha," which laments a life wasted at the age of 14. I'll take some more of that, please.

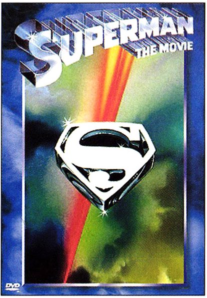
Final Score ●●●●

John Scalzi has been reviewing music since when Mat Hoffman was still using training wheels. Ride on over to his Web site at www.scalzi.com for full details.

DVD Reviews

By John Scalzi

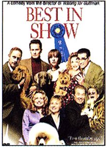
This month's episode features drugs, dogs, kryptonite and sex kittens—oh, and a heaping helping of female fantasy. From Christopher Reeve to Christopher Guest, from cross-dressing to border-crossing, you'll find it here.



Superman Collector's Edition

Here's what I could never understand: They paid Marlon Brando millions to be in this film for five minutes, and he couldn't even pronounce "Krypton" correctly. Hey! Don Corleone! It's "CRIP-tahn"! Sheesh. *Superman* is kind of dated now (it came out in 1978), but it's still surprisingly entertaining, thanks to Gene Hackman's genial supervillain Lex Luthor, and Chris Reeve's famously wooden (and thereby perfect) performance as the Man of Steel. The collector's edition piles on the extras, including added scenes, commentary by director Richard Donner, four documentaries, and screen tests of the stars. This DVD is also available as part of a collector's set, but that would require you to purchase *Supermans III* and *IV* as well, and no human should be made to do that.

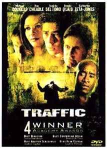
Movie Score ●●●◖
DVD Extras Score ●●●●●



Best in Show

Freaky obsessive behavior is inherently amusing; throw some dogs in the mix, and you've got a dogpile full of fun. That's the idea behind *Best in Show*, a "mockumentary" that follows a bunch of truly dysfunctional dog fanciers to a prestigious dog show. Director Christopher Guest (you know him as Nigel Tufnel from *Spinal Tap*) and his crew of comic improvisers fill the movie with nastily observant moments about these sort of people and their dogs. Laugh at them, but remember they'd think slavering over MGS2 is pretty creepy. DVD extras include commentary by Guest and deleted scenes.

Movie Score ●●●●
DVD Extras Score ●●●



Traffic

Hey, kids! Drugs are bad! Stay in school! There, I've done my part for the anti-drug movement. And yet people still buy drugs! *Traffic* follows the drug war brilliantly, from the highest reaches where politicians loftily declare the war, down to the levels where people buy and die. The film picked up four Oscars, including one for director Steven Soderbergh, and one for Benicio Del Toro as a Mexican cop caught in the drug crossfire. A really worthwhile film, but the DVD extras aren't all that—a Showtime "making-of" documentary and some press materials—so you might want to rent for now and wait to buy until the inevitable "Special Edition" shows up in a couple of years.

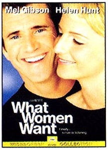
Movie Score ●●●●●
DVD Extras Score ●●◖

VINTAGE CLASSICS
SPECIAL EDITION
MARILYN MONROE
TONY CURTIS
JACK LEMMON
SOME LIKE IT HOT

Some Like It Hot Special Edition

Ever wonder why Marilyn Monroe is still the ultimate Hollywood sex icon? You won't once you watch *Some Like It Hot*. As an extra bonus, *Hot* is one of the great comedies of all time, a deliriously amusing gender-switcher that makes recent essays on the form, like, say, *Big Momma's House*, look like crap. My only complaint is that for a "Special Edition," the DVD features aren't terribly exciting—a documentary with star Tony Curtis and critic Leonard Maltin, and a featurette on the girl band that Monroe, Curtis and co-star Jack Lemmon were supposedly in through the film.

Movie Score ●●●●●
DVD Extras Score ●●●



What Women Want

They want a movie about Mel Gibson learning to get in touch with his feminine side, of course! (A movie called *What Men Want*, on the other hand, would be about Jennifer Lopez at the door with a six-pack.) Mel gets the ability to read women's minds to find out what they really think about him—as if this was any great mystery—and at the end of it, he gets Helen Hunt. The moral: Life is cruelly unfair to all other men. DVD extras include director commentary, a behind-the-scenes documentary, and interviews with the stars. Neither the film nor the extras are exceptional, but both are reasonably diverting.

Movie Score ●●●
DVD Extras Score ●●●

DVD News

Coens' Odyssey

Rejoice, Coen brothers fans. Apparently their Oscar-nominated (and Oscar-shafted) film, *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* will release on June 12. Although the film is supposedly based on Homer's *Odyssey*, the Coens have admitted that they've never read the classic text.

Superheroes

Unbreakable, the follow-up to M. Night Shyamalan's Oscar-nominated *Sixth Sense*, will be landing on store shelves sooner than we anticipated. Apparently on June 19 your local retailer will be able to fill your shopping bag with this movie. Oh, and it's a two-disc set!

They keep pulling us back in!

Rumor has it that the *Godfather* trilogy will finally grace DVD collections in the fourth quarter of 2001. But we've overheard from **thedigitalbits.com** that it will be a four-disc boxed set. Along with all three films, there will be a disc exclusively used for bonus materials.

Lightsaber dueling

According to **aintitcoolnews.com**, the street date has been set for *Star Wars: Episode I–The Phantom Menace*. Rumors have been swirling for a while, but apparently on October 16 Star Wars fans can get their hands on the two-disc special-edition DVDs.

The other survivor

On June 5, Tom Hanks fans can add the Oscar-nominated *Castaway* to their collection. We haven't heard of any extras yet, but our fingers are crossed.

Vive la France!

It may be a foreign film, but anyone who hasn't seen Krzysztof Kieslowski's *Blue, White & Red* series is missing out. Apparently, Miramax has plans to make it into a deluxe boxed set. No date has been set, but when we find out, we'll let you know.

Coming Soon

5/15/2001
Best in Show
Nightwatch: SE
Twelve O'Clock High

5/22/2001
A Few Good Men: SE
Point Break
Requiem for a Dream
Sex and the City:
Complete 2nd Season
Some Like It Hot
Vertical Limit

5/29/2001
Close Encounters of the
Third Kind
Shadow of the Vampire
Tootsie
Traffic
Two Family House

6/5/2001
All the King's Men
The Cannonball Run
Castaway
Crouching Tiger, Hidden
Dragon
The Fugitive: SE
The Muppet Movie

6/12/2001
O Brother Where Art
Thou?

6/19/2001
Charlotte's Web
Unbreakable

TWELVE O'CLOCK HIGH

VERTICAL LIMIT

THE CANNONBALL RUN

TOP 10 CHARTS

PS2 Top 10

Last month we saw the meteoric rise of Knockout Kings 2001, and this month we see its meteoric fall. Instead of sports titles dominating the top spots, we've got action/adventure games showing their power. We're just happy people are buying ATV Offroad Fury.

	Last Month	Title / Publisher	Rating
1	—	The Bouncer *Square EA*	●●●
2	—	Onimusha: Warlords *Capcom*	●●●●
3	3	Madden NFL 2001 *EA Sports*	●●●●◖
4	—	Triple Play Baseball *EA Sports*	●●
5	—	Star Wars Starfighter *LucasArts*	●●●●◖
6	—	Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2001 *EA Sports*	●●●
7	4	ATV Offroad Fury *Sony CEA*	●●●●
8	2	NBA Live 2001 *EA Sports*	●●●
9	6	SSX *EA Big*	●●●●●
10	7	Tekken Tag Tournament *Namco*	●●●●◖

To be perfectly honest, even with its ho-hum reviews across the board it's not that surprising to find The Bouncer debuting at the top of the charts, considering that it has some of the greatest graphics this side of MGS2. It's certainly a sharp showcase for the system. The question is, how long can it stay on the charts when it takes under two hours to beat? Tune in next month to find out.

KOU
VOLT
SION

Tiger on the cover of this game is making it fly off the shelves. But after winning four straight majors, we can understand why.

Source: NPD TRSTS Video Games Service, mid-March 2001. Call them at 516.625.2481 for questions about this list. No games for competing console systems (e.g., N64, Dreamcast) were included. Overall sales figures may vary. Game descriptions written by the OPM staff.

OPM's Most Wanted PS2 Games

1	Metal Gear Solid 2	*Konami*
2	Dark Cloud	*Sony CEA*
3	NBA Street	*EA Big*
4	Final Fantasy X	*Square EA*
5	Gran Turismo 3	*Sony CEA*
6	Twisted Metal: Black	*Sony CEA*
7	Klonoa 2	*Namco*
8	Crazy Taxi	*Acclaim*
9	Red Faction	*THQ*
10	Silent Hill 2	*Konami*

Japan's Top 10 PS2 and PS one Games

1	RE Code: Veronica (2)	*Capcom*
2	Monster Farm (2)	*Tecmo*
3	World Soccer Eleven (2)	*Konami*
4	TV Animation Battle (1)	*Bandai*
5	Klonoa 2 (2)	*Namco*
6	Oni Zero: Fukkatsu (1)	*Pandora*
7	Suiko Gaiden Vol. 2 (1)	*Konami*
8	Shutoko Battle Zero (2)	*Genki*
9	Extermination (2)	*Sony CEJ*
10	Boku to Maou (2)	*Sony CEJ*

OPM's Most Wanted PS one Games

1	Final Fant. Chronicles	*Square EA*
2	Spider-Man 2	*Activision*
3	Black & White	*Midas Int.*
4	Castlevania	*Konami*
5	Hoshigami	*Atlus*
6	C-12	*Sony CEA*
7	Saiyuki: Journey West	*Koei*
8	Twisted Metal Kids	*Sony CEA*
9	Tales of Destiny 2	*Namco*
10	Arc the Lad Collection	*Working D.*

Top 10 Selling Games, All Systems

1	The Bouncer (PS2)	*Square EA*
2	Onimusha (PS2)	*Capcom*
3	Conker's BFD (N64)	*Nintendo*
4	Pokémon Silver (GBC)	*Nintendo*
5	Pokémon Gold (GBC)	*Nintendo*
6	Paper Mario (N64)	*Nintendo*
7	Madden NFL 2001 (PS2)	*EA Sports*
8	Triple Play (PS2)	*EA Sports*
9	SW Starfighter (PS2)	*LucasArts*
10	Tiger Woods 2001 (PS2)	*EA Sports*

PS one Top 10

We couldn't be happier about Tony Hawk's leap back into the No. 1 spot. But we're disappointed that Triple Play Baseball, a subpar effort, managed to swing its way to the seven spot just because all those EA automatons keep on buying it.

	Last Month	Title / Publisher	Rating
1	2	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2 *Activision*	●●●●●
2	3	Driver 2 *Infogrames*	●●●●
3	5	Gran Turismo 2 *Sony CEA*	●●●●●
4	1	WWF SmackDown! 2 *THQ*	●●●●●
5	—	Spec Ops *Take 2 Interactive*	●
6	—	Ford Racing *Take 2 Interactive*	●●◖
7	—	Triple Play Baseball *EA Sports*	●●◖
8	—	ATV: Quad Power Racing *Acclaim*	●
9	7	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater *Activision*	●●●●◖
10	—	Darkstone *Take 2 Interactive*	●●●◖

Playing Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX this month reminds us of how dynamic and exceptional THPS2 actually is, and why everyone in the world is buying it. For a few months now we've had to tolerate WWF SmackDown! 2 at the top of our list (which is a fine game, a wonderful game, it's just not skateboarding). Now we'll wait patiently to see if Mr. Hawk's fantastic game can hold onto the top spot.

SCORE
8422
SPECIAL
1:29
2368 X2

WWF SmackDown! 2 fell from the top spot. We're wondering if it isn't because of the WCW merger, meaning lame wrestlers galore.

Source: NPD TRSTS Video Games Service, mid-March 2001. Call them at 516.625.2481 for questions about this list. No games for competing console systems (e.g., N64, Dreamcast) were included. Overall sales figures may vary. Game descriptions written by the OPM staff.

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Coming Soon

May

Cool Boarders 2001	Sony CEA	X-Sports
Crazy Taxi	Acclaim	Action
Dark Cloud	Sony CEA	RPG
Gauntlet: Dark Legacy	Midway	Action
MS Gundam: Journ./Jaburo	Bandai	Action
Motor Mayhem	Infogrames	Action
Red Faction	THQ	Shooter
Rumble Racing	EA Games	Racing
Soccer America: IC	Hot-B	Sports

June

Bloody Roar 3	Interplay	Fighting
CART Fury	Midway	Racing
CMX 2002 f/ R. Carmichael	THQ	Racing
Escape From Monkey Island	LucasArts	Adv.
Giants: Citizen Kabuto	Interplay	Adv.
Gran Turismo 3 A-spec	Sony CEA	Racing
Le Mans 24 Hours	Infogrames	Racing
NASCAR Heat	Hasbro	Racing
NBA Street	EA Sports	Sports
Paris-Dakar Rally	Acclaim	Racing
Portal Runner	3DO	Action
Test Drive Off-Road: WO	Infogrames	Racing
Twisted Metal: Black	Sony CEA	Action
WDL: WarJetz	3DO	Action

July

Evil Twin	Ubi Soft	Adv.
Ico	Sony CEA	Action
Klonoa 2: Lunatea's Veil	Namco	Action
Rune: Viking Warlord	Take 2	Action
Supercar Street Challenge	Activision	Racing

Other Summer

007 Racing	EA Games	Action
7 Blades	Konami	Action
18 Wheeler	Acclaim	Racing
BASS Fishing	THQ	Fishing
Commandos 2	Eidos	Strategy
Dark Angel: Vampire Apoc.	Metro3D	Action
Duke Nukem: D-Day	Rockstar	Adv.
ESPN X Games: Skatebrdg	Konami	X-Sports
Fur Fighters	Acclaim	Action
Half-Life: Decay	Sierra	Shooter
Herdy Gerdy	Eidos	Adv.
Heroes of Might & Magic	3DO	RPG
Leg. of Kain: Soul Reaver 2	Eidos	Adv.
moderngroove: MoS	Ubi Soft	Music
Monster Rancher 3	Tecmo	RPG
MS Gundam: Zeonic Front	Bandai	Action
Project Eden	Eidos	Adv.
RE-Code: Veronica X	Capcom	Adv.
Stunt GP	Infogrames	Racing
Trophy Bass	Sierra	Fishing

Future Releases

Age of Empires II	Konami	Strategy
Aliens: Colonial Marines	Fox Int.	Action
Aliens Versus Predator 2	Fox Int.	Shooter
Baldur's Gate: DA	Interplay	RPG
Batman: Vengeance	Ubi Soft	Action
Cops	Fox Int.	Action
Crash Bandicoot: TWoC	TBA	Action
Dead to Rights...	Namco	Action
Devil May Cry	Capcom	Adv.
Dragon's Lair 3D	Mattel	Adv.
Dragon Wars of M&M	3DO	Action
Driven	bam!	Racing
Ephemeral Fantasia	Konami	RPG
ESPN Nat'l Hockey Night	Konami	Sports
ESPN NFL Prime Time	Konami	Sports
Extermination	Sony CEA	Adv.
Final Fantasy X	Square EA	RPG
Frogger: The Great Quest	Konami	Action
The Getaway	Sony CEA	Racing
Gitaroo-man	Koei	Action
Grand Theft Auto 3	Rockstar	Action
Harry Potter	EA Games	Adv.
Hidden Invasion	Conspiracy	Action
Hot Shots Golf 3	Sony CEA	Sports
Kessen II	TBA	Strategy
Leg. of Kain: Blood Omen 2	Eidos	Adv.
Legend of Alon D'ar	TBA	RPG
Legion: Legend of Excalibur	Midway	Strategy
The Lost	Crave	Adv.
Lotus Extreme Challenge	Interplay	Racing
Madden NFL 2002	EA Sports	Sports
Metal Gear Solid 2: SoL	Konami	Adv.
MTV Music Generator 2	Codemasters	Music
NCAA Football 2002	EA Sports	Sports
No One Lives Forever	Fox Int.	Shooter
Run Like Hell	Interplay	Adv.
Silent Hill 2	Konami	Adv.
Silent Scope 2	Konami	Shooter
The Simpsons Racing	Fox Inter.	Action
Sled Storm 2	EA Sports	Racing
Smuggler's Run 2	Rockstar	Racing
Soldier of Fortune	Majesco	Shooter
Space Channel 5	Sega	Dancing
Spider-Man The Movie	Activision	Action
SSX: DVD	EA Sports	X-Sports

Final Fantasy X

Square prepares to blow us away all over again

When presented with the chance to check out Final Fantasy X, we all knew to expect a lot from the next installment in **Square**'s acclaimed RPG series—but little did we expect such utter coolness. What little we played of the game gave us ample indication that this is truly the kind of upgrade that one would expect with the PS2. The graphics, the sounds, the gameplay—the entire experience—are greatly improved for this new quest. This is the next generation of RPGs. And we couldn't be more excited.

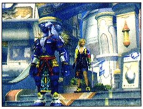
The game's look is what immediately shocks you. As we've described in the past, FFX's graphics now come at you in full 3D (as opposed to the 3D characters laid over 2D backgrounds, as in the past). And thanks to the power of the PS2, the 3D backdrops provide pure eye-candy, especially thanks to subtle movements like swaying grass and flowing water, all stunningly crisp. The game's stellar special effects feature realistic fog and mist, as well as explosive magic effects.

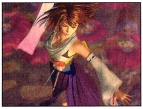
The breathtaking effects play a subtle yet significant role in one of the most impressive aspects of FFX—its direction. They work together with cameras that dramatically change angles to manifest a pure movie-like experience. No doubt, Square has had to wait for the PS2 in order to effectively accomplish this level of interactive, cinematic storytelling.

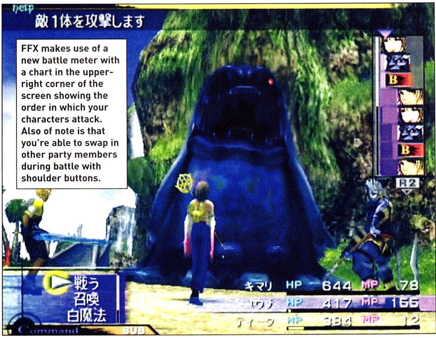
As we've also told you in past issues, FFX introduces voice acting to the FF series. While Japanese has comprised every word we've heard so far, the lip-syncing and voices themselves emanate with high quality. It'll be interesting to see how the U.S. version's voices turn out.

As you run through the world, the camera constantly moves around your character instead of sitting in a static place until the scenery updates. As you progress, you'll encounter enemies in the typical "random battles" style, only transitions into the fights occur smoothly, as though they were a planned occurrence. The battles themselves are typical FF fare, adding an all-new battle meter (see below).

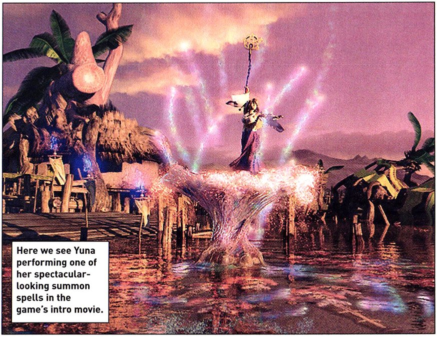
Overall, we're mighty impressed with what we've seen so far. **Fall** can't come soon enough...



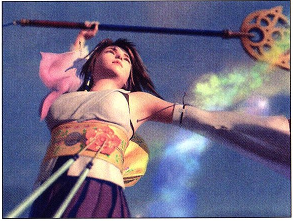


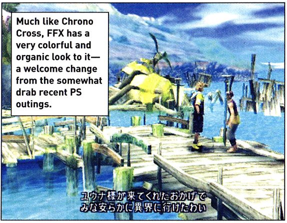


FFX makes use of a new battle meter with a chart in the upper-right corner of the screen showing the order in which your characters attack. Also of note is that you're able to swap in other party members during battle with shoulder buttons.



Here we see Yuna performing one of her spectacular-looking summon spells in the game's intro movie.



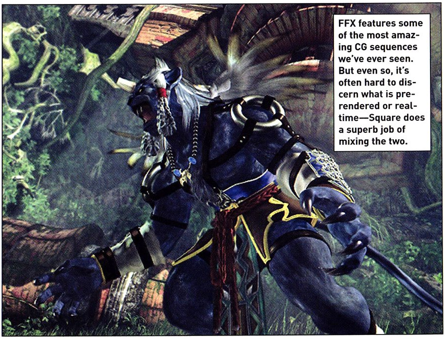


Much like Chrono Cross, FFX has a very colorful and organic look to it—a welcome change from the somewhat drab recent PS outings.

ユウナ様が来てくれたおかげで
みな安らかに異界に行けたわい

ユウナ：でも わたしが子供のころから
ずうっと守ってくれてるの

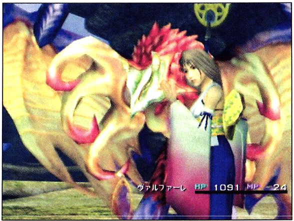
ユウナ：キミのザナルカンドは
きっと どこかにあると思う



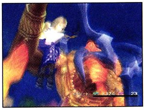
FFX features some of the most amazing CG sequences we've ever seen. But even so, it's often hard to discern what is prerendered or real-time—Square does a superb job of mixing the two.

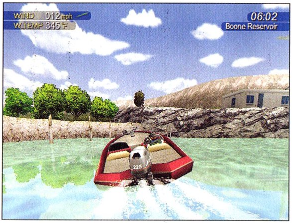
Guardian Forces

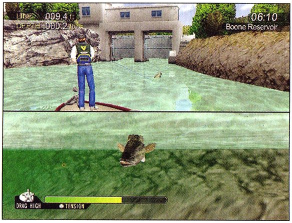
One of the neat aspects of FFX is that it allows you to summon monsters, but keep them for more than just one attack. Once you call upon your monster, you're able to control it as you would any other character in your party. This means that you can use hand-to-hand combat as well as magic and special attacks. Regular Final Fantasy fans will be glad to hear that Guardian Forces Shiva and Ifrit (and possibly others) reappear in this latest game.



ヴァルファーレ HP 1091 MP 24

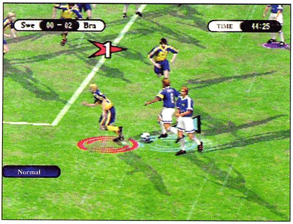






BASS Fishing (working title)

Only a working title?! But "BASS Fishing" is so spot-on, mixing the Platonic ideal of titular perfection with a vim and vigor never seen in a next-gen fishing game! And what can be more deserving of such a title than this **summer** release from **THQ**? It's got the Bass Angler Sportsman Society (B.A.S.S.) license. It's got...wait for it...120 different lures. It's got seven authentic—yes, *authentic*—BASS Tournament Trail Lakes. Alas, we can only pray that it'll keep that brilliant title.



Soccer America: International Cup

Not to be outdone by footy releases from Konami and EA Sports, **Hot-B USA** throws its hat onto the pitch this **May**. Soccer America: International Cup features 36 of the world's finest teams ready to compete in shootouts, exhibitions, or one of two tourneys: International Cup (18 teams) or the Soccer America Cup (32 teams). The game implements 49 different camera angles to master the TV-style broadcast, and comes with an official sponsorship from Diadora.

Extermination

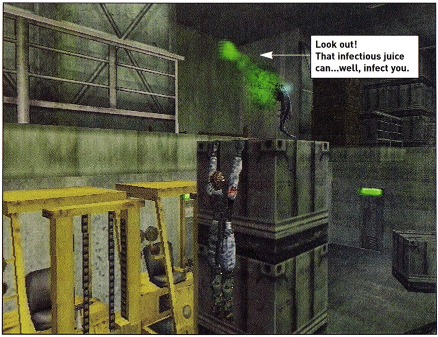
Panic action satisfaction

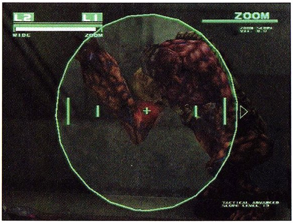
In recent months, Extermination has drawn a great deal of comparison to Resident Evil and other games of the survival-horror ilk. A quick look at the facts seems to justify such a grouping. After all, it is a third-person adventure where you're practically alone as you attempt to figure out all the weird stuff going on around you. On multiple occurrences, you might even find yourself jumping from a quick scare. And if that's not enough, Tokuru Fujiwara, a producer on the original Resident Evil, leads the project, now three years in development. But after playing the game for a while, as we did in an early version recently sent to us, you start to realize that enough subtleties exist to make it something else.

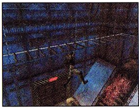
Immediately, you'll notice a difference in controls, as Extermination abandons the loved-by-some, loathed-by-others "Resident Evil control scheme." So instead of always pressing up to get your character to move forward (even if he's facing in another direction), for instance, pressing up in Extermination moves Dennis Riley to the upper portion of the screen, no matter what direction he faces. His movement is much more liberal, as well, with abilities such as jumping, climbing and hanging all essential to making it through the Antarctic military base that houses his perils.

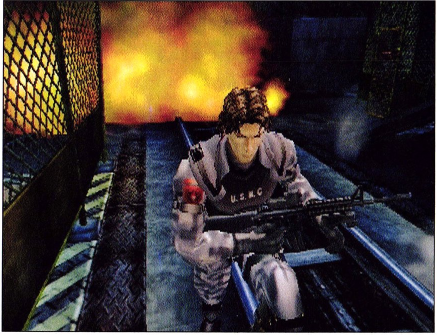
And the perils, they are aplenty. Once you've entered the compound after a few simple jumps and other obstacles, things get a bit too quiet for you to feel comfortable. Then you start running across journal entries talking about "them" and their "infectious juices." And, finally, "they" start to appear. Appearing at first glance to be some sort of harmless skunk-like creature, it doesn't take long before you figure out what they're actually capable of—i.e., ending your life. And though you are perfectly capable of dying due to a total loss in health, such is not the style of these little guys. Rather, they prefer to spit at you until you're infected with the very virus that has eradicated most of the life on the base.

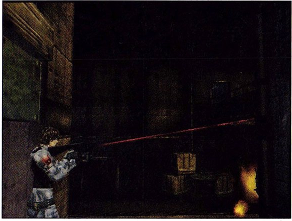
With "them" always seeming to be everywhere and hence tending to make you a bit edgy, **Sony CEA** has dubbed Extermination with its own subgenre: "panic action." Experience it yourself this **July**.

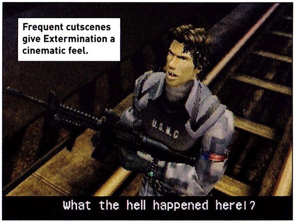

Look out! That infectious juice can...well, infect you.







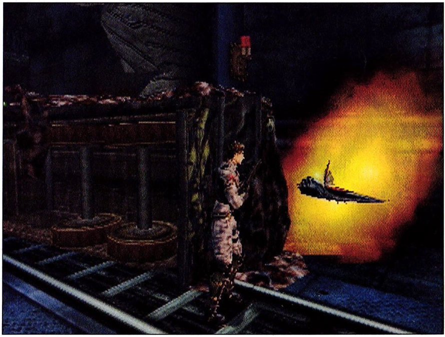




Frequent cutscenes give Extermination a cinematic feel.

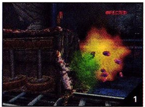
What the hell happened here!?

Is it a password for something?



Infection

Once his infection level reaches 100 percent, our hero Dennis must reach a health chamber or use a vaccine item before his life force expires. The pictures to the right detail an instance when he isn't so lucky: 1) One of "them" infects Dennis with the virus, self-destructing once its job is done. 2) A huge, eye-like formation sits across his back as he races to a health chamber. 3) He doesn't make it.



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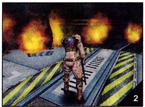

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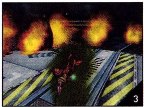

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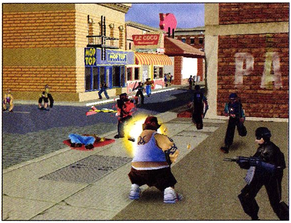
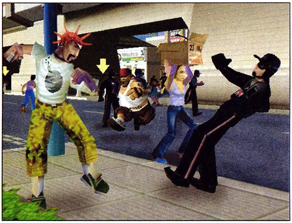
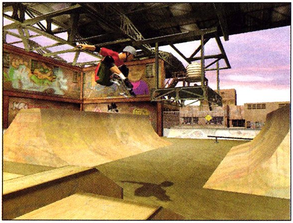




State of Emergency

Sure, **Rockstar** may be working on Grand Theft Auto 3 to satisfy the needs of the wannabe criminal within you—but State of Emergency might take things even further. Serving as a sort of riot simulator, the game places you in the midst of as many as 80 riots, where your overall objective is to smash, loot and basically pound anyone in your way to bits. And with over 100 people brawling it up at once Dynasty Warriors 2 style, you've got a lot of pounding to do this **fall**!



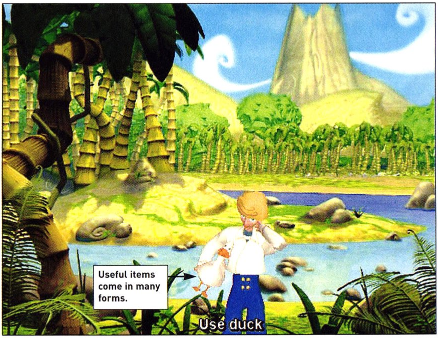
ESPN X Games: Skateboarding

We were holding our breath for another entrant into the skateboarding circle (the dripping sarcasm should be evident), but at least **Konami**'s version is going to give us a chance to try some sick skate tricks on the PS2. This **August** you can select from a cast of eight skaters (though we're not sure who they are just yet), in six different locales including New York and L.A. The soundtrack comes packed with Linkin Park, Voodoo Glow Skulls, New Found Glory and more.

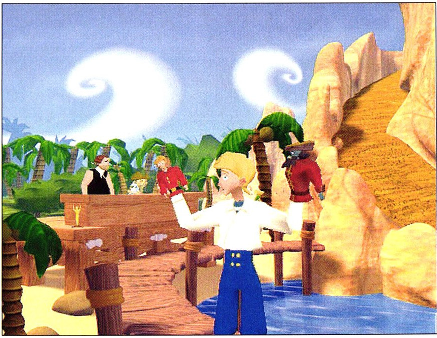
Escape From Monkey Island

Guybrush escapes to PS2

Hear the word "pirate," and several names come to mind: Captain Hook, Long John Silver, Bluebeard, Blackbeard, Guybrush Threepwood. What's that? You've never heard of Guybrush Threepwood? Then you're obviously not familiar with **LucasArts**' Monkey Island, one of the greatest PC graphic adventure franchises of all time. The fourth game in the hilarious series, Escape From Monkey Island joins the unlikely swashbuckler upon his post-honeymoon return to Melee Island, only to find that his lovely governor of a new wife, Elaine, has apparently been declared dead, with their mansion scheduled for demolition. Apparently, a sleek new politician named Charles L. Charles, who seems eerily familiar for some reason (see sidebar), has won over the people in her absence, and is vying strongly for the governorship himself. It'll take another farcical endeavor by our favorite Guy to set things right this **June**. And if that's not enough to entice you, know this: There will be monkeys. Lots and lots of monkeys.



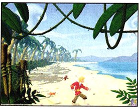
Useful items come in many forms.



What LeChuck?

The slick politician in EFMI might go by the name Charles L. Charles, but anyone who's played the previous three MI games should have a good idea as to his actual identity—the ghost pirate LeChuck! In the first MI, Guybrush proved his worth as a pirate by saving Elaine from the wraith, who was in love with the fair governor. Not wanting to wed a dead guy, Elaine took a special liking to Guy. LeChuck has sought revenge against Guy ever since.

Use banana picker



Pre-Order Watch

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Amazon.com	Yes	$49.99	6/22/01
Buy.com	N/A	N/A	N/A
EBgames.com	Yes	$49.99	6/19/01
Express.com	N/A	N/A	N/A
GameStop.com	N/A	N/A	N/A

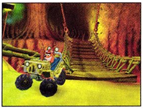
all data as of 4/10/01

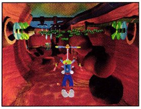
Crash Bandicoot: The Wrath of Cortex

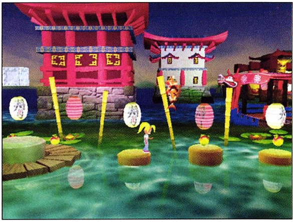
Crash's nemesis unleashes his secret weapon

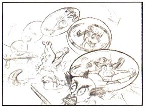
Ever since Crash Bandicoot burst onto the scene in his first platform adventure, Dr. Neo Cortex has had something in the works in the background—even through his numerous defeats by the marsupial. This secret weapon has only now neared completion, however, and, along with the evil living mask Uka Uka, Cortex has determined the only way to power it: Unleash the vile power behind the four Elemental Masks, held in check for centuries only through the use of magical crystals. And Cortex has succeeded. Only one mammal out there—well, maybe two if you count his little sis—is brave enough to collect the crystals necessary to quell the threat of the Elemental Masks. Any idea who that might be?

Thanks to **Universal Interactive**, Crash returns to platform gaming in The Wrath of Cortex, with 24 levels of elementally charged action ahead of him—plus another six for sister Coco. Crash's staple jumping, slamming and spinning join new moves like tip-toeing when the game ships in **November**.



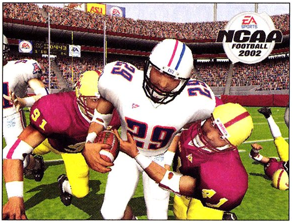






Goin' For A Ride

Crash's quest against Cortex gets considerable help from four different vehicles used both by him and Coco. As seen in screenshots above, Crash zooms along nicely in his jeep and hang glider. Coco gets a lift, meanwhile, through the use of her yet-to-be-seen personal scooter. We're most looking forward to a look at Crash's inflatable Atlus Sphere, though, seen in concept form to the left.



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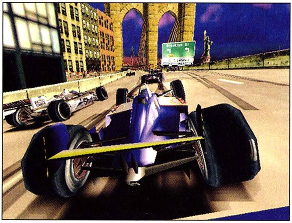
EA SPORTS
NCAA FOOTBALL 2002

NCAA Football 2002

This **fall**, college football fans finally have something to cheer about (insert GameBreaker slam here) thanks to **EA Sports**, with likely the most realistic NCAA game ever. In addition to gameplay that should closely resemble the already-solid Madden series (only with unique moves and commentary from Brad Nessler, Lee Corso and Kirk Herbstreit), you've got 144 teams, all 26 bowls, the Heisman Trophy, detail down to helmet stickers and player GPAs, and so much more.



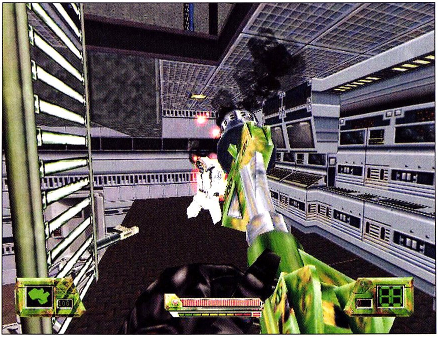
CART Fury

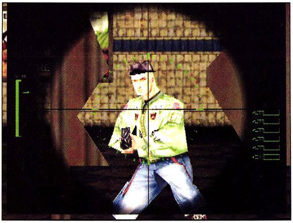
Midway is sprinkling a heaping helping of fantasy to what is traditionally a fairly realistic genre. In addition to 15 real CART drivers and seven actual courses, the game throws in 11 fantasy courses, including some set in the streets of Chicago, Frankfurt and New York—as well as one on the moon! And the action here is all Midway's trademark arcade style, with turbo boosts, stunts and spectacular crashes. Strap yourself in and prepare to hit the road in **June**.

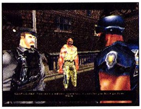
Soldier of Fortune

Not for the faint of heart

It takes guts to release a game like this in the current violence-sensitive market. With characters sporting 26 different hit locations (there's even a snazzy marketing buzzword for the technology: Gore Zones), it's clear that grisly realism was a focus in the development of this PC-native game, due to arrive on the PS2 courtesy of **Majesco** in **September**. You haven't seen video game realism until you've seen a shotgun blast amputate an enemy's arm at the elbow, or watched a bad guy writhe in pain, clutching the exact spot where you've nailed him. Of course, violence isn't the only draw here (in fact, it's possible—though not yet confirmed—that the gore may be toned down a bit for the somewhat younger console audience). A plot full of international intrigue puts you in the shoes of mercenary John Mullins as he sets out to track down four stolen nuclear warheads. Along the way you'll travel to five different continents, working through 26 levels divided into 10 missions. And you also have the opportunity to take on your real-life friends in multiplay, with support for up to four players. And like Star Trek Voyager: Elite Force, the press release for Soldier of Fortune hints at possible online play. With Sony expected to release its online plans in the very near future, could we see online games as early as fall?







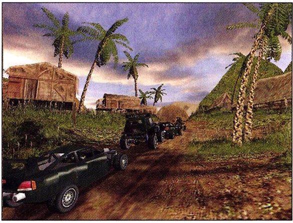
Real-Life Soldier of Fortune

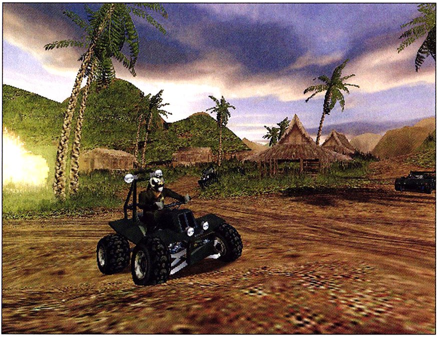
Soldier of Fortune's main character is based on real-life mercenary John Mullins, a consultant for the game. Mullins served three tours of duty in Vietnam during his 19 years as a Green Beret, retiring from the military in 1981 to work "freelance." He is an author, consultant, and founder of three companies specializing in military applications. Check out www.planetsoldier.com for more details.

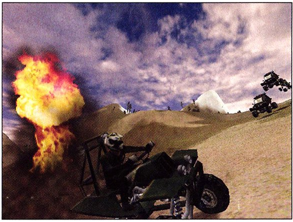
Smuggler's Run 2: Hostile Territory

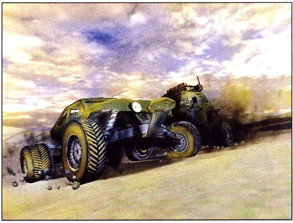
From "green and happy" to dark and deadly

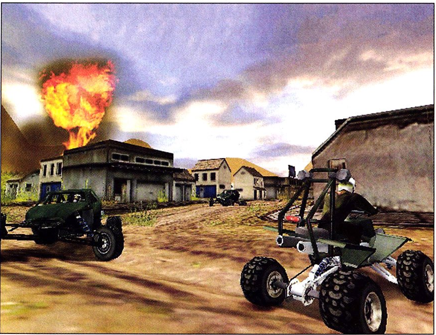
With the original Smuggler's Run having been such a blast, we were excited to learn that **Rockstar** has a sequel planned for **October**. And it looks like the company is equally excited to get its hands dirty with this sequel. "The first game," says producer Jeronimo Barrera, "was very 'pastoral'—you know, kind of green and happy. Now you're going into more seedy locales, where there's war happening, so there's definitely more death involved." How seedy, you ask? How about Afghanistan and Vietnam? That's right, now drivers will have to contend with crossfire in addition to rival gangs and the authorities. And you also need to take more care with your cargo—some contraband can be damaged in flight, and some can even explode. Yikes. Weather and time of day factor into the mix, as well. But you do have a wider array of vehicles at your disposal this time, including quad bikes and heavy military vehicles. The expected 60 frames per second framerate should also work to your advantage.

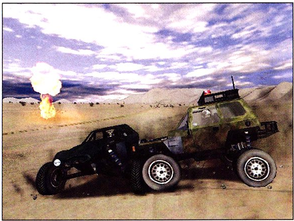


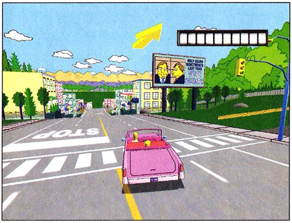


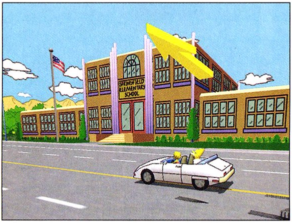






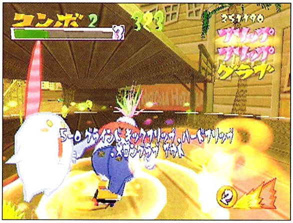






The Simpsons Racing

OK, so maybe The Simpsons Wrestling failed miserably (check out Reviews). That doesn't mean that America's favorite animated dysfunctional family can't rebound on PS2! From what we've seen of this **Fox Interactive** title (which, granted, isn't a whole heckuva lot), hopefully hitting stores **late this year**, it seems to place Homer, Lisa and others behind the wheel as they deliver denizens of Springfield to their desired destinations. Simpsonized Crazy Taxi, anyone?



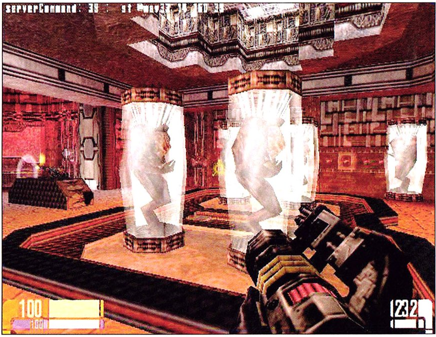
Yanya Caballista featuring Gawoo

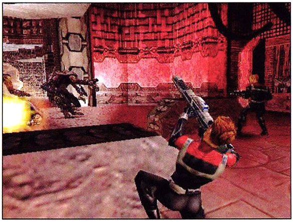
No, Gawoo isn't the name of some world-class skateboarder you've never heard of. Rather, it's a race of alien beings whose only weakness is, naturally, skateboarding. In other words, Yanya Caballista (we're counting on a different title by the time the game hits America in **September**) isn't just **Koei**'s version of Wannabe Tony Hawk's Pro Skater. What you've got here is an all-out cel-shaded action game controlled with a "fingerboard" that fits atop your analog sticks.

Star Trek Voyager: Elite Force

Step into the final frontier

We've seen how nicely the Quake III engine can be ported to the PS2, so, being based on the engine itself, it's not unreasonable to expect big things from **Majesco**'s port of Elite Force. Add to this the incorporation of the beloved *Voyager* franchise—especially as the series draws to a close—and you've got one tall order to fill. Fortunately, Elite Force appears up to the task, with 40 single-player levels and 16 multiplayer arenas (the game will support up to four players—and Majesco also offers a tantalizing "possible online playability" in its press release). The plot? The U.S.S. Voyager is mysteriously transported to the interior of a hostile ship. You, as a member of the Voyager's Hazard Team, must work with your teammates to get to the bottom of the mystery. Along the way, you'll encounter 14 different kinds of enemies, including an entirely new race of aliens. And to add to the experience, you'll even hear voice-overs from members of the actual cast of *Voyager*. Prepare to beam aboard in **September**.





Come Aboard

It's a little-known fact that the *Voyager* set—unlike many TV and film sets—is largely composed of complete, enclosed rooms. We had a chance to walk the decks of the ship for our Invasion feature last year, where we learned that the most frequently used areas, from Sickbay to Engineering, are fully built in order to offer the most varied selection of camera angles. The walls are fitted with removable panels to allow camera access.

Gran Turismo 3 A-spec

Start booking that time off...it's nearly here

June will be a great month for your PS2. Many of you who haven't bought a system yet will, no doubt, seriously consider it when Gran Turismo 3 appears in stores. Girlfriends will be angered at men's lack of productivity or willingness to get their fat asses off the sofa, as they get "just one more" upgrade for that crappy little hatchback they bought at the beginning of the game. Pre-order now. Book a week off.

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GRAN TURISMO

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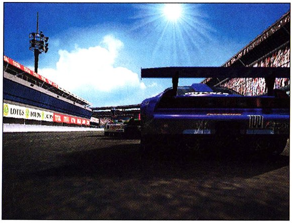

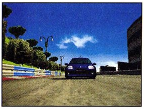

PENNZOIL
PENNZOIL
Firestone
SHELBY AMERICAN, INC.
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Best 2:01:053
1 2:01:053
Lap --:40:135
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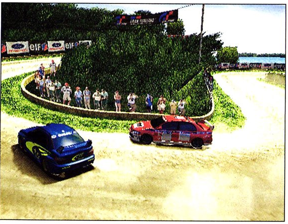
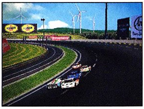
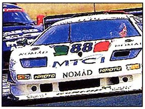




Looks Pretty Real To Us

The inclusion of a variant of the Lamborghini Diablo GT has caused car loons to salivate, regardless of whether or not it's an "official" Lambo, or a bit of a Ruf-style Porsche cheat. (This technically isn't a Lamborghini; it's a race-spec Diablo, and the team is credited as the builder, not Lamborghini.) Irrespective of this, check out how real it looks! On the left is the real thing, on the right, the car from GT3.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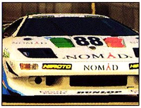

Pre-Order Watch

STORE	PRE-ORDER	PRICE	SHIP DATE
Amazon.com	Y	$49.99	6/28/01
Buy.com	Y	$49.99	6/15/01
EBgames.com	Y	$49.99	6/15/01
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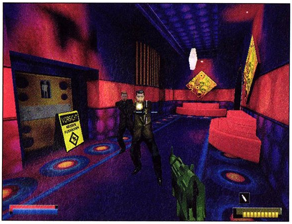
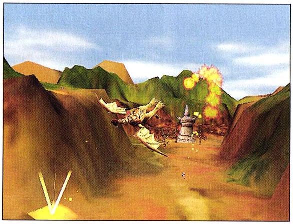
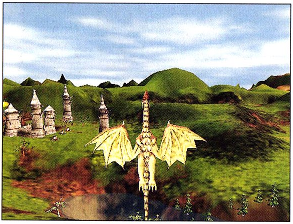


No One Lives Forever

Fox Interactive originally planned to release this '60s-set first-person shooter alongside its award-winning PC version, but now the PS2 incarnation finally appears to be nearing completion in time for a **September** release. Don't expect the exact same game as on PC, however, as Cate "The Operative" Archer's PS2 adventure includes an additional four levels featuring her younger days as a thief. Quite the addition to a game already boasting a healthy 15 huge missions.





Dragon Wars of Might and Magic

3DO's Might and Magic series takes to the skies this **fall**, when you as the dragon Cale Cynder take on the forces of the malevolent orcs. As you whisk through the eight interactive environments at a speedy 60 frames per second, take out 40 types of enemy units, both ground-based and airborne, with your variety of special fighting moves. And if those 16 levels of orc-busting aren't enough, you can always engage a friend in one of the six multiplayer games.

Herdy Gerdy

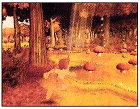
Lame name, luscious visuals

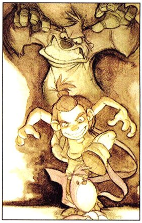
You probably haven't heard much about Herdy Gerdy yet, but that's about to change. This project has been bouncing around **Core**'s offices for nearly three years (it first started on the N64), and if our recent peek at the game is any indication of how good the final product will be (slated for **late this year**)...well, let's just say we'll all be talking about Herdy Gerdy for years. Lame name and all.

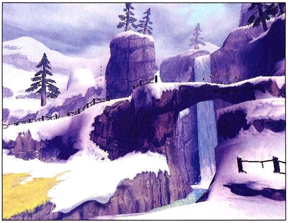
Why? You control a cartoon. And no, we're not talking about just a cel-shaded character running around a 3D background—this is an honest-to-goodness freakin' cartoon. Like, so good you'd watch it on TV. Those backgrounds? Fully hand-painted without a duplicate texture to be found. The characters (all 300 of them!) are all fully 3D, and have an amazing amount of animation and personality. "The game is probably the closest thing that I've seen today to a Disney movie," boasts Adrian Smith, Core's director of operations.

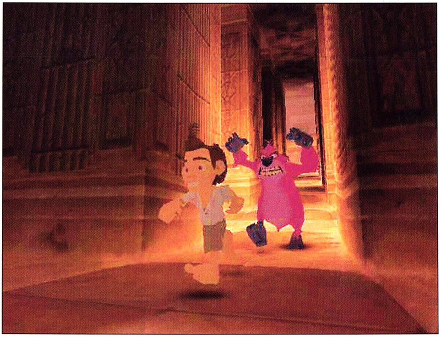
Your goal is to herd animals into cages—a job easier than it sounds. To do this you'll have to outsmart the little (and sometimes big) beasts by using tools or the environment around you. "It's all about the social behavior of all the animals that live on this island, and how they interact with one another, and with the environment, and with Gerdy himself," Smith explains.

So, in other words, it's an amazing-looking thinking-man's game. That has the visuals of a cartoon.





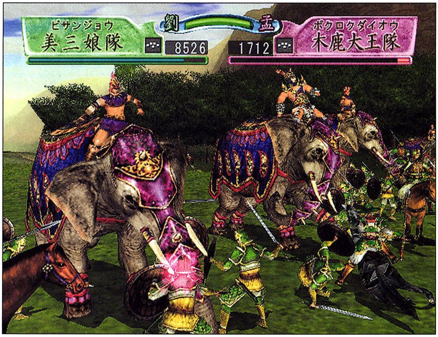


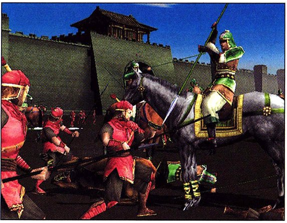


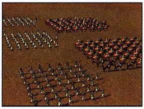
Kessen II

And then came the elephants

We told you back in April's preview of Kessen II that **Koei**, the game's developer and possible publisher (EA Games might have dibs—no one seems to be sure), would include elephants in the heat of the battles set in the Three Kingdoms era of China. And now we've finally got some shots of them. Lumbering onto the battlefields, these huge beasts could end up as mere dots on your television, as they join as many as 500 characters on screen at once—five times as many as the last game! As you command Liu Bei's Shu kingdom against Cao Cao's kingdom of Wei, the addition of magic to the gameplay formula established by the first Kessen should also help to liven things up, along with 30 battles to (theoretically) triple your game time. The game's still not slated 'til **October**, so we'll be sure to keep you abreast of further developments.

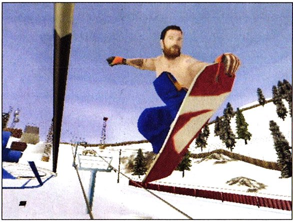


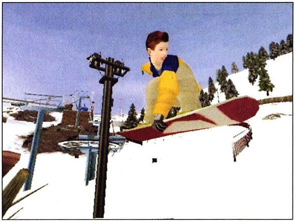




Capturing the Motion

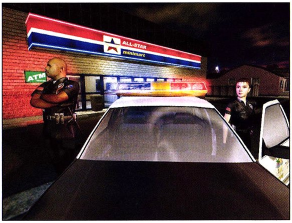
Anyone who played the original Kessen had to be impressed by the in-game cinematics, as well as the character movement during gameplay. Of course, Kessen II promises to offer much of the same—only on a much larger scale. And what does that mean? Motion capture! Lots of it. More than before, even. Here, we see two manly chaps preparing for direction from Hiroshi Kataoka.





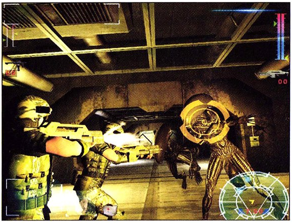
Shaun Palmer's Pro Snowboarder

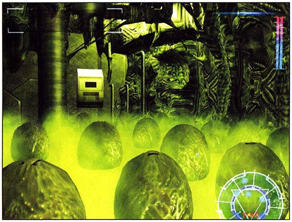
After SSX wowed us, we've been itching to find out more about **Activision**'s entrant into the snowboarding scene. Responsible for the excellent Tony Hawk's Pro Skater and Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX, the company already boasts unparalleled street cred—so we're expecting the same magic on the slopes. We're slim on details for now, but this **fall**, expect a tight soundtrack, nine boarders (including the multitalented Palmer), as well as freestyle and boardercross competitions.



Cops

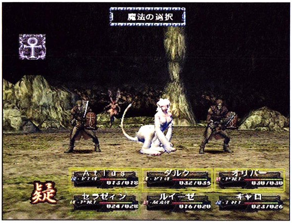
Hey **Fox**, hey Fox, watcha gonna do? Watcha gonna do when you release Cops on PS2? Yes, while we were able to procure this screen from the upcoming game based on the long-running Fox television show *Cops*, we received it so late in our deadline cycle that no details were offered, other than its probable **fourth quarter 2001** release. We're pretty sure that you can expect plenty of "bad boys," though, as you chase them through the streets of major metropolitan areas.





Aliens: Colonial Marines

Fox Interactive has entrusted a relatively untested developer, **Check-Six**, to develop one of its two Aliens games planned for release **late this year**. We say "relatively" untested because, though Check-Six has no games to its credit, members of the team have taken part in such quality projects as MechWarrior 2 and the *Starship Troopers* CG-animated series. Details are hard to come by at the moment, but all indications suggest some Rainbow Six-like, squad-based action.



Untitled Atlus RPG

Atlus unleashes something for the old-school gamer this **winter**, when its yet-to-be-named RPG hits the U.S. Early word suggests the game takes a direct influence from the revolutionary PC RPG series Wizardry, but with Interplay currently holding the rights to the title, it doesn't seem possible for Atlus to use the venerable name. But that doesn't mean you still can't guide a party of warriors through first-person perils against some fine-looking fantastical minions!

Half-Life: Decay

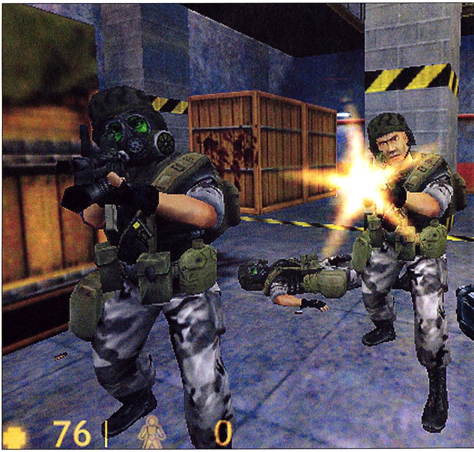
Exclusive PlayStation 2 episode revealed

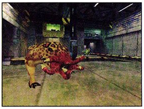
Valve's award-guzzlin' first-person shooter, Half-Life, is about to get a major kick in the pants for the PlayStation 2. Developer **Gearbox** has harnessed the extra horsepower of the PS2 and retrofitted everything from player models to enemy AI. Even stuff as innocuous as health dispensers and spent bullet casings get the sort of update and attention to detail other, less ambitious developers only dream of.

While porting Half-Life to the PlayStation 2 will, no doubt, introduce the franchise to scores of first-timers, **Sierra** also wants to give veterans of the series something new to look forward to. To that end, Gearbox has been hard at work on Decay, the latest chapter in the sprawling Half-Life mythos. Decay takes place shortly before and during the fateful accident which interweaves key occupants of the Black Mesa complex. Amazingly enough, the story fits like a perfect piece of the puzzle: Players slip into the powersuits of two female hazard course trainers—and, like main protagonist Gordon Freeman, must utilize any resources they can to get the hell outta Dodge.

Unlike Gearbox's other installments, Opposing Force and the forthcoming Blue Shift (on Dreamcast and PC), Decay was designed from the get-go to be a two-player cooperative experience. Whereas a split-screen environment is usually considered a major faux pas by serious deathmatch fans, Decay takes advantage of the players' ability to always see each other's screen and provides plenty of co-op puzzles, goals and combat strategy. If you lack that special friend to share the experience, you can partner up with an intelligent "bot," which will take care of the day-to-day tasks like taking out enemy soldiers and watching your six. Aside from a list of commands you can issue to your AI partner, you also have the power to switch, on the fly, between the two characters.

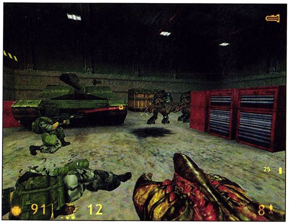
From what we've played so far, the result is a fantastic adventure that combines both teamwork and competition. And as far as we can tell, it's the first 3D shooter that does more than just drop in a second player purely for the sake of firepower. Worth the price of admission alone? We definitely think so.

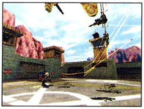


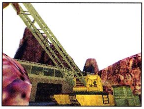


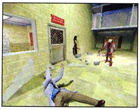
Improved AI

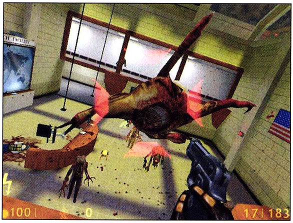
What made Half-Life special on PC wasn't the graphics—it was the lifelike AI of the enemies. While a lot of creatures in the alien bestiary were a little on the dense side, nobody walked away from the game without getting a thorough spanking from the enemy soldiers. HLD on PS2 actually features improved AI, so enemy soldiers sweep, cover and clear sectors as a unified, ass-kicking machine.

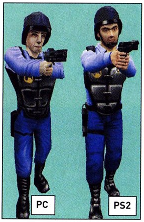






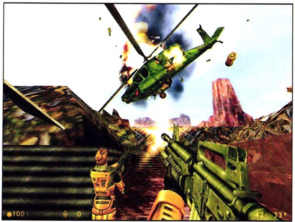


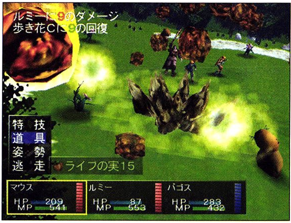




Barney

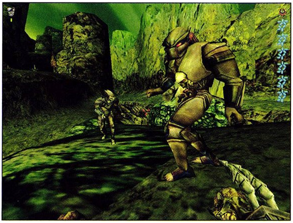
This isn't just another dopey rent-a-cop—this is Barney, the de-facto character model for security guards stationed all over Half-Life's Black Mesa complex. Aside from starring in his own episode of Half-Life called Blue Shift on the Dreamcast and PC, Barney will look better than ever, thanks to the master cosmetologists over at Gearbox. Just compare the two versions of Barney to the left—the difference in quality is downright startling.

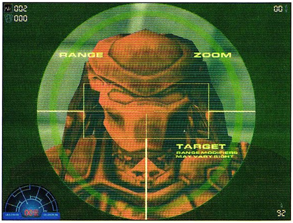




Ephemeral Fantasia

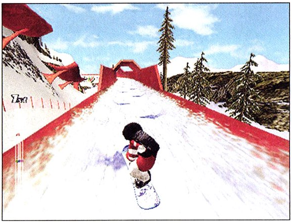
Now that **Konami** has officially announced Ephemeral Fantasia, we're looking forward to some magic-guitar-based RPG action this **fall**. The game boasts environments of full 3D, spectacular battles and unique camera views. Its epic story involves that of a heroic young bard who stands as the only chance for a magical island suffering under the oppression of an evil spell. The character's magic guitar serves as the source of his power throughout the struggle.





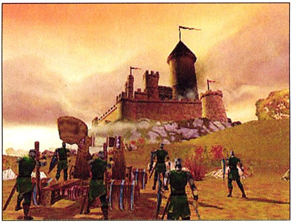
Aliens Versus Predator 2

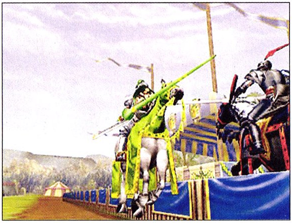
Fox Interactive's original Aliens Versus Predator won all sorts of awards when it hit PCs in 1999. In addition to the undeniably kick-ass premise of two of filmdom's most fearsome antagonists waging war on one another, the first-person shooter also gave you the chance to take the side of either race—even a boring old human marine if you wanted. The **Q4** sequel promises the same format, so AVP2 should make console FPS fans very happy. Count on more details soon.



Cool Boarders 2001

Sony CEA is going back to the drawing board with the PS2 edition of the original PlayStation snowboarding game, developing an entirely new physics engine, a ton of new tricks, and new, wide-open courses all set on one huge mountain. Ten pro riders, lots of real board and gear licenses, and an affiliation with the Vans Triple Crown of Snowboarding will offer even more realism, as will weather effects and a new, dynamic time-of-day feature. Expect this one in **late May**.





Robin Hood: Defender of the Crown

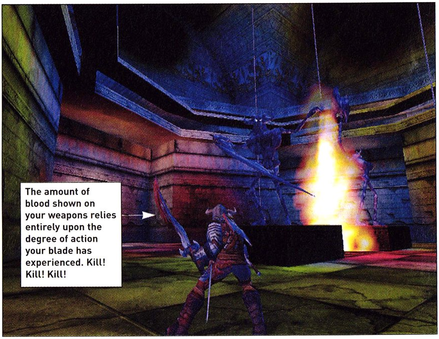
"Battle rages across the land." If you played computer games in the late '80s, chances are those words bring a nostalgic tear to your eye. Well, guess what? **Cinemaware** is back—and Defender of the Crown is on the PS2 release list for **spring 2002**. This revamp shifts focus to Robin Hood, but retains the glorious strategy/action gameplay of the original, complete with tournaments, fair maidens and castle sieges.

Rune: Viking Warlord

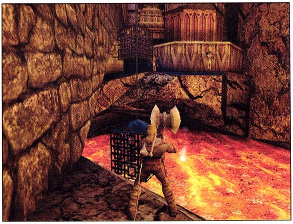
Showing the potential to Ragna-*rock*

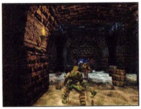
So far, the only Vikings you've seen on your PS2 have worn purple uniforms and had names like Randy Moss. That all changes this **July**, though, when **Take 2 Interactive** brings Rune: Viking Warlord, the "definitive version" of last year's PC hit Rune, to the system.

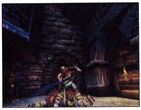
RVW places you in the role of a Viking named Ragnar—whose wardrobe we're pretty sure lacks any purple—in a hack-and-slash quest to defend humanity from Ragnarok (if you're not up on your Norse mythology, that's the final battle between man, god and giant that will bring about the end of the world). In order to succeed, you must brave the forces of the shadowy masters of the netherworld through 40 unique, action-packed environments. Mythological creatures like hellhounds, frost giants and the walking undead stand in your way, as you pound them to submission with 15 unique axes, hammers and swords. Collect runestones to call upon each weapon's unique power, or even add insult (and further injury) to injury by ruthlessly flailing away at an enemy with its own severed limbs. As if RVW doesn't sound cool enough already, the fact that many of the game's characters and levels were designed by Spawn creator and comic-book legend Todd McFarlane only entices us even further.

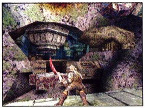


The amount of blood shown on your weapons relies entirely upon the degree of action your blade has experienced. Kill! Kill! Kill!







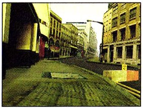


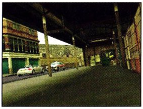
The Getaway

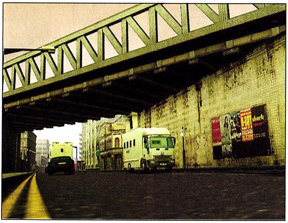
Your monthly dose of insane realism

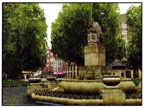
Imagine yourself immersed in the seedier areas of London, drenched in the atmosphere often exuded by top British director Guy Ritchie (*Snatch, Lock Stock and Two Smoking Barrels*). Add a plot that spins the tale of Mark Hammond, an ex-bank robber wrestling with his inner consciousness, blamed for the murder of his wife, while searching for his son who is being held by the real killers. Introduce gameplay with Driver/Grand Theft Auto-like elements and some third-person action. And, finally, offer up 40 square kilometers of accurately modeled London streets and locations, with a level of realism rarely seen in games thus far. That's the basic model for **Sony**'s The Getaway, and as you've seen over the past few months, we're damn excited about this **holiday** release.

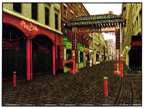
The level of realism the team is striving for is, to put it bluntly, crazy ambitious. At its heart, The Getaway is a driving game, but the ability to step out of the car and take action in a third-person perspective brings the game to a whole new level. There will be 12 missions altogether, and the way you complete them is, for the most part, up to you. Say you know the bar where the thugs you are after are having a cig. You can quietly walk up to the shop and surprise them, or be a bit more gung-ho, announcing your arrival to everyone by driving right up to the bar, which results in bystanders screaming and running for cover. All this commotion, while representing a stylish entrance, will of course alert the goons inside to your arrival. Mayhem ensues. Too cool.





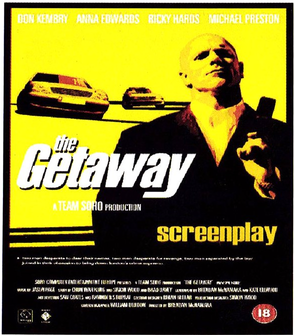






Get This

The Getaway development process is the embodiment of modern-day game design. With a 100-plus development staff, real actors used as virtual models in the game, motion-capture sessions, professional costume designers, art directors and a production designer who worked on *Tomorrow Never Dies* and the ill-fated *Thunderbirds* flick, the game is no doubt one of the biggest PS2 productions thus far. The new wave of British films such as *Snatch*, using modern visual storytelling, clearly serves as inspiration for The Getaway—which is cool, because that kind of material and direction are perfect video-game fodder. Expect to see plenty of cursing, violence, guns and pimps—and a definite Mature rating.


DON KEMBRY ANNA EDWARDS RICKY HARDS MICHAEL PRESTON
the Getaway
A TEAM SOHO PRODUCTION
screenplay
18

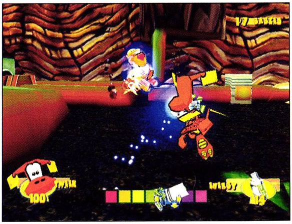
Fur Fighters: Viggo's Revenge

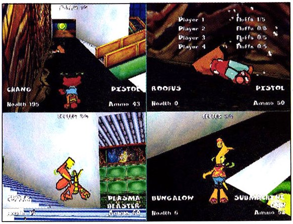
Fuzzy animals with big guns

Even though Fur Fighters was originally released a year ago on Dreamcast, **Bizarre Creations** has been working on the PS2 version since well before that time. And, like it ought to, the developer has made sure this **summer** PS2 game from **Acclaim** lives up to the system's potential, including a whole slew of upgrades.

The biggest improvement is that characters now sport some cool cel-shading, something which has been de rigueur for cartoon-style games recently. Far from just a gimmicky add-on, the effect is put to good use here, as it helps bring out the personality of the characters and...well, it just *looks* cool.

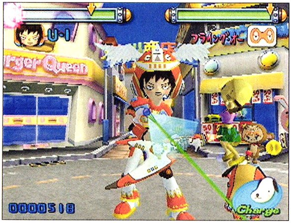
So the game looks a lot better, but much more importantly, the levels now come tighter and more compact. New storytelling elements have been included, a large part of which owes thanks to the additional voice acting, which replaces the gobbledygook present in the DC version. The preview version we played also features a music mixer that you can toy around with while the levels load (you trigger sounds with the controller). Hopefully this will stay in the final. All in all, Bizarre's small improvements and changes should really make for a far tighter package.





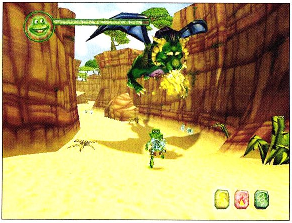
The Mission

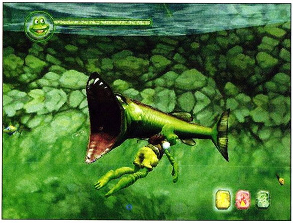
General Viggo and his henchmen (or hench*bears*, in this case) have kidnapped a bunch of babies, and it's your job to save them. But you'll have to switch characters in order to rescue certain animals—Roofus the hound ain't rescuin' no feline babies. No sir. Each character also has unique abilities, like claw marks on a wall to possibly indicate that you need to switch to Juliette the cat.



Gitaroo-man

A couple issues ago, we told you about this quirky Japanese title from **Koei**, guessing a U.S. release as likely as a David Lee Roth/Van Halen reunion. Well, you might as well jump, 'cause it's coming this **fall** (maybe even the reunion if you believe the rumors). This "action/music" game requires you as a shunned elementary-school student named U-1 to keep with the rhythm as you shoot, duck and dodge your way through enemies en route to saving all of Planet Gitaroo.





Frogger: The Great Quest

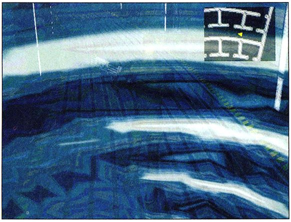
Now that **Konami** has its Frogger rights back, the company isn't wasting any time in bringing the classic-gaming character to life—more so than ever! In The Great Quest, our web-footed hero hops into his first 3D platform game, in the spirit of Rayman 2 or Banjo-Kazooie. In addition to the hip-hoppety action, the **fall** release boasts plenty of chuckles, such as the mischief-causing Mosquito Gang, featuring members like Positive, Negative, Hemo and Globin.

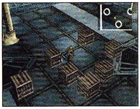
Run Like Hell

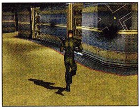
Like *Alien 5*, sans Sigourney

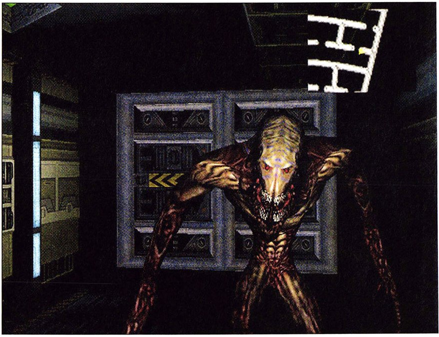
Travis Williams of developer **Digital Mayhem** can sum up the horrific inspiration behind Run Like Hell, a third-person action game due this **September** from **Interplay**, in a sentence: "It's a cross between *Aliens* and *The Thing*...only more terrifying." Strong words to be sure, but all early signs seem to indicate some serious spine-tingling potential. As Nick, a soldier exiled in a deep-space mining station, your goal is simply to survive against a malevolent alien race that has annihilated nearly everyone else on the station. "[There are] more aliens than *Aliens*," continues Williams. "You will have to think, act and shoot quickly to stay alive." Sound easy? It's not. "Aliens constantly adapt based on player actions," says Williams, in reference to enemy artificial intelligence. "It's the thinking person's action game."

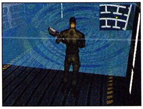
Run Like Hell divides into seven chapters, each encompassing a day of your hellacious week on the station. It all amounts to around 20 hours of gameplay, including over three hours of cinematics. Even better, the voice talents of Kate Mulgrew (Captain Janeway on *Star Trek Voyager*) and Lance Henriksen (*Millennium*'s Frank Black and Bishop from, appropriately, *Aliens*) combine to yield some Hollywood credibility to what Williams calls "one of the scariest, most disturbing games ever made."

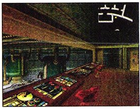








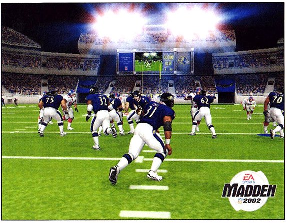


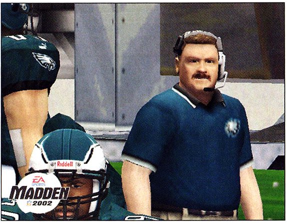


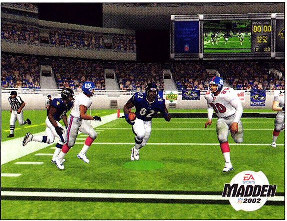
Madden NFL 2002

Twelve years and running

Of all the PS2 launch games that knocked our socks off, few excelled to the degree of **EA Sports**' Madden NFL 2001. This **fall**, things get even better. Players' faces and body shapes more accurately reflect their real-life counterparts, as do the better-looking coaches yelling from the sidelines. The rousing Two-Minute Drill first seen in last season's PS one version makes its PS2 debut, along with a Create-A-Team mode that includes custom uniforms, helmets and stadiums. New Madden Cards, hundreds of new animations, and the addition of the Houston Texans also freshen this always improving franchise. You can even relive Madden '93!







Ico

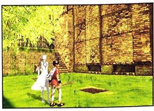
It rhymes with "geek-o"

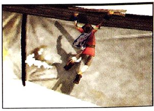
Ico has "sleeper hit" written all over it. With its odd name, unique game world, and no hype whatsoever thus far, this **Sony CEA** game will shock most anyone who gives it a try this **August**. We certainly were floored by what little we've played to this point. To put it simply, Ico has atmosphere. Loads of it.

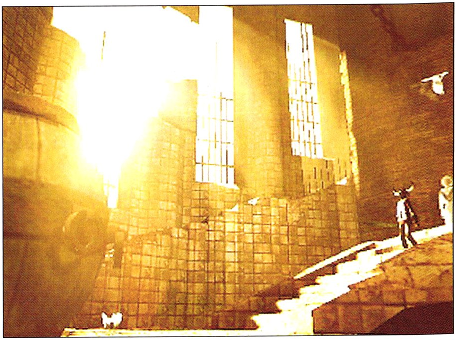
It's something you'll notice immediately. The characters all have a very *Where the Wild Things Are*/Panzer Dragoon-like look to them, as they roam through massive environments. One scene in particular—where you hop from dangling platforms strung high up in the air, while above you the sky flashes with lightning, and below you the dark sea beckons—especially surprised us.

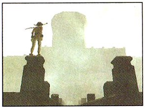
The sound also plays a major role in building the game's mood. Currently, a relative lack of music allows the ambient sounds to create the aural environment. Also, in a very Tolkien-esque move, the language used in Ico was created specifically for the game. Ico himself speaks English, but the rest of the dialogue remains a mystery—that is, until you play the game a second time through, when it features subtitles for all the speech.

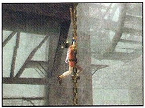
The game's story revolves around Ico, a boy banished to an abandoned castle because he was born with horns. Ico must escape this castle as well as rescue a princess also locked away. The two work together, solving puzzles and defeating enemies.

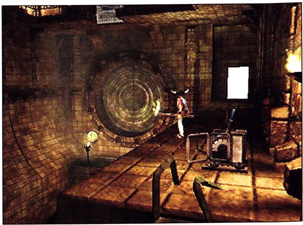








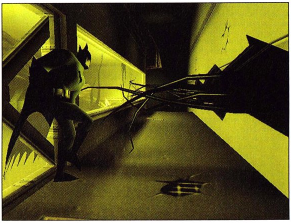


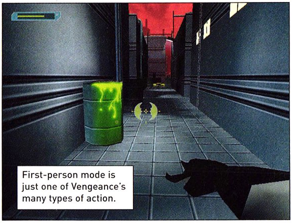


Batman: Vengeance

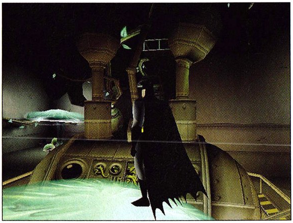
The Dark Knight looks so right

Batman fans took it personally last year when **Ubi Soft** released Batman Beyond: Return of the Joker for PS one, widely regarded as the worst game of the year. But this **September**, the company looks to redeem the Dark Knight's good name by taking things back to the days when Bruce Wayne wore the cape and cowl. And as you can see, if looks alone mean anything, then Batman: Vengeance might just rank right up there with Spider-Man in terms of superhero gaming greatness. The gameplay sounds promising as well, including several types of action—everything from standard hand-to-hand combat to a "free-fall" level. We'll have more next month.





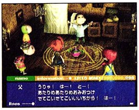
First-person mode is just one of Vengeance's many types of action.



The Devil and I

The devil made me do it!

Your sister is struck down by some nasty ghosts floating around town, and what does your dad do? He invokes a magical spirit named Stan to come out of his bottle and revive your sibling. Titled Boku to Maoh in Japan (loosely translated as "The Devil and I"), this *Nightmare Before Christmas*-y RPG brings together the reluctant allies Luca (the main character and brother of the stricken girl), Rosalie (a soldier cursed by Stan with a pink shadow) and Kissling (a poetry lover and expert on poltergeists who thinks he can help you in your travels). Luca owes Stan a favor in return for helping his sister, and must journey to find and defeat Stan's more-powerful rival. Using a rather simple rock-paper-scissors hierarchy in the battle system, Devil and I was designed for novices and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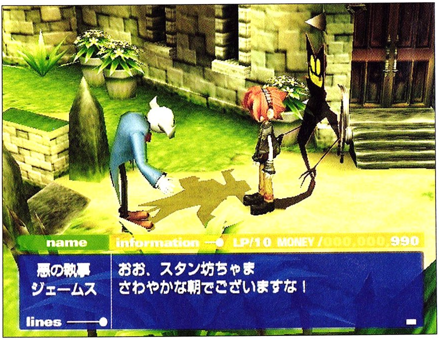
父

うりゃ！　はー！　とー！
あたりめあたりめおみおつけ
でてこいでてこいいいちから！　はー！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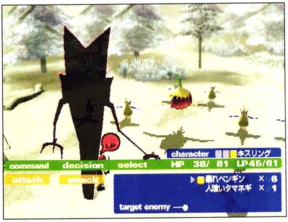
悪の執事
ジェームス

おお、スタン坊ちゃま
さわやかな朝でございますな！


character
キスリング
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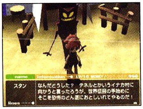
暴れペンギン × 6
人喰いタマネギ × 1
target enemy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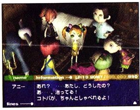
スタン

なんだどうした？　テネルとかいうイナカ村に
向かうと言ったろうが。世界征服の手始めに
そこを恐怖のどん底におとしいれてやるのだ！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アニー

あれ？　……あたし、どうしたの？
あ……、治ってる！
コトバが、ちゃんとしゃべれるよ！

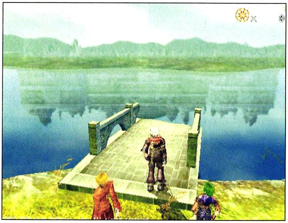
Evergrace II

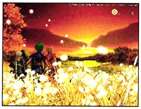
Fighting and fashion, all in one

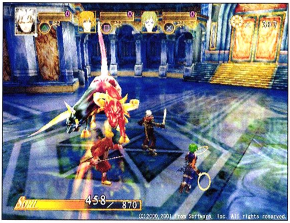
OK, so the original Evergrace wasn't much more than a cult hit (and maybe "hit" is stretching things a bit). That's no reason to close your mind to the possibility of a sequel—or, more accurately, prequel—especially considering **From Software**'s planned changes for the release of Evergrace II.

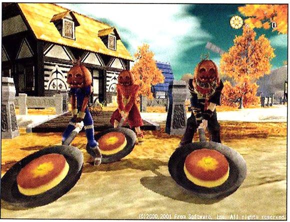
For one thing, the original's alternating dual-character storyline is being replaced by a true party system. Returning hero Yuterald is now joined by two companions: his faithful friend Ryana and the mysterious Fillna. Both have their own motivations for joining Yuterald on his quest (an admittedly cookie-cutter quest, at that, as he seeks revenge upon the man who slaughtered his entire village), and working out their differences plays into part of the story.

Furthermore, Evergrace II features some extensive visual tweaks. Environments now sport spectacular graphic effects, and everything seems much more detailed—a nice change from the ho-hum look of the original. But thankfully, the game retains its whimsical, unique "fashion" system. Yes, you once again have the chance to play dress-up with your characters in order to properly interact with others, solve puzzles and conquer enemies. Still no word on a U.S. release, but we expect Agetec to look into it.



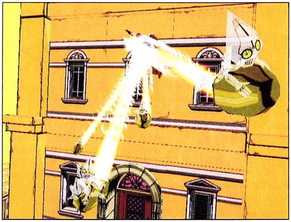


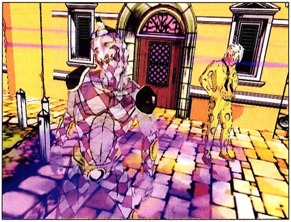




Play dress-up!

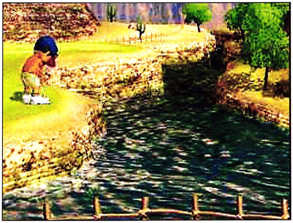
As in the original Evergrace, you'll need to coordinate the accoutrements of your party members to surpass certain puzzles and earn the consideration of some townsfolk. These get-ups can get a bit, er, eccentric: The original game featured helmets, for example, constructed of pumpkins, sauce pans and even a bird's nest! That's not even mentioning the flamboyant armor—luckily, you could change the colors to avert a fashion disaster.





Jojo's Bizarre Adventure Part 5

Capcom is currently preparing its first original fighting game for the PS2. Based on the fifth installment of the Japanese comic series (it's not the fifth Jojo game to come out), Jojo Part 5 is accomplished using cel-shaded animation in order to give off a very 2D look and feel. The incredibly smooth animation makes everything look very crisp and clean in motion. Jojo takes place in Italy and allows you to control many high-flying combatants there. Japan gets Jojo this **fall**.



Hot Shots Golf 3

While the basic gameplay in **Sony CEA**'s super-addictive, ultra-accessible golf series will be similar to the previous games, Sony expects this edition to feature more realistic characters, a creature-collecting minigame and other additions. Most intriguing, though, is the planned online tournament: Players will earn a code in the game, submit it to an official site, and obtain an international ranking. No word yet on a U.S. release date; we'll keep you posted.

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Coming Soon

May		
Blast Lacrosse	Acclaim	Sports
Blaster Master: BA	Sunsoft	Action
Dave Mirra BMX: Max. Remix	Acclaim	X-Sports
Deep Sea Fishing	Acclaim	Fishing
Looney Tunes: Sheep Raider	Infogrames	Puzzle
Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX	Activision	X-Sports
MLB 2002	Sony CEA	Sports
Point Blank 3	Namco	Shooter
Ronaldo V-Soccer	Infogrames	Sports
Roswell Conspiracies	Red Storm	Action
Sea-Doo Hydrocross	Vatical	Racing
June		
Alone in the Dark: TNN	Infogrames	Adventure
Black & White	Midas	Adventure
Dracula: The Resurrection	DreamCatcher	Adventure
In Cold Blood	DreamCatcher	Adventure
Motocross Mania	Take 2	Racing
Rescue Heroes: Molten Menace	TBA	Action
Time Crisis: Project Titan	Namco	Shooter
WDL: WarJetz	3DO	Action
July		
Dance Dance Revolution w/ Pad	Konami	Music
Digimon Card Battle	Bandai	Card Game
Final Fantasy Chronicles	Square EA	RPG
Saiyuki: The Journey West	Koei	Strategy
Future Releases		
Arc the Lad Collection	Working Designs	RPG
Arthur's Quiz Show	The Learning Co.	Trivia
Barbie Explorer	Mattel	Edutainment
C-12	Sony CEA	Action
Cargo!	Infogrames	Action
Castlevania	Konami	Action
Digimon Card Battle	Bandai	Cards
Digimon Grand Prix	Bandai	Racing
Dragon Warrior VII	Enix	RPG
Hidden & Dangerous	Take 2	Action
Hoshigami: Ruining Blue Earth	Atlus	Strategy
Jumpstart Kindergarten	Knowledge Adv.	Edutainment
Kasparov Chess	Titus	Chess
Madden NFL 2002	EA Sports	Sports
NASCAR Racers	Infogrames	Racing
Obee: Tale of the Circus	Sound Source	Edutainment
Planet of the Apes	TBA	Adventure
Power Rangers Time Force	THQ	Action
Rocket Power	THQ	X-Sports
Syphon Filter 3	Sony CEA	Action
Tales of Destiny 2	Namco	RPG
Tony Hawk Skateboarding	Activision	X-Sports
Twisted Metal Kids	Sony CEA	Action

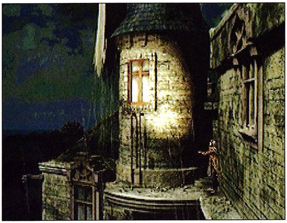
Alone in the Dark: The New Nightmare

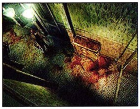
Finally, the nightmare begins

Near midnight, consider going to a remote part of your home. Maybe slink down the stairs, grab a Coke from the fridge in the corner of the basement, or try to trample up for a quick peek into the attic. Even a quick trip into a suburban backyard would work. If the mood is right, the late-night creaks of imagined footsteps, or the sudden snap of a too-close tree branch, can send shivers all over your body leading you to burst into a dorky sprint back to a safer part of your home. It's the anticipation of something that frightens you, the off-chance of your mind's eye conjuring up worse nightmares than reality has to offer. Such is the emotional context of **Infogrames'** newest bad dream, Alone in the Dark: The New Nightmare, a cinematic adventure that, even in its current incomplete state, is as scarily stimulating as it is beautiful.

A traditional storyline starts things off: Two separated castaways must survive long enough to reconnect. Sounds pretty typical, huh? But TNN isn't your everyday adventure. You're on a supposedly deserted island as leading man Edward Carnby investigates the murder of his friend, while Aline Cedrac, the female lead, reluctantly tags along. The use of light and dark gives TNN its unique mood. You have a flashlight for comfort, but that slim beam of illuminance won't show off every atrocity surrounding you. Some quick-moving beasts might try their best to use snakelike tongues to strike at your stomach. Meanwhile, in the water, an unseen force might suck you under. Empty hallways aren't safe, either, and the ceiling could be teeming with danger.

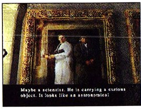
But of all the elements at work, the environments and sound join forces most effectively, yielding a high level of suspense. When nearing a danger area or traipsing over bloodstained floorboards, the intensity of the music rises to match the moment. And when you're whipping your flashlight around in a new, dark room, searching for your bearings, try not to get too caught up in the detail and grandeur of your surroundings—because at any moment something might jump out at you, quickly concluding your investigation. Keep your eye on the shadows this **June**.





Storytelling

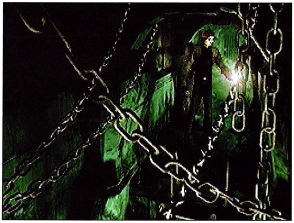
The original script for TNN checked in at just over 100 pages, but soon grew all the way to 800. Seems obscene for a video game, but the intentions of Darkworks, the developer, were always to insure a movie feel. The storytelling doesn't rely solely on characters interacting or journals spread around the mansion. For instance, if you spot paintings on the wall, you best look closely—chances are, something in the art has a bearing on the game.



Maybe a scientist. He is carrying a curious object. It looks like an astronomical

Monster Mash

During the course of your adventure, 15 types of monsters cruise around inside and outside of the mansion, each equally frightening. Consequently, each type of beast can kill you in a completely different way. Things start out simple enough, when rabid dogs chase you down, nipping at your ankles and forearms. But that's child's play. Later, you'd better hope for protective eyewear, because some gruesome monsters do their scary best to tear your eyes out! Yikes!



Pre-Order Watch

STORE	PRE-ORDER	PRICE	SHIP DATE
Amazon.com	Yes	$39.99	6/29/01
Buy.com	Yes	$39.99	6/27/01
EBWorld.com	Yes	$39.99	6/27/01
Express.com	Yes	$39.99	6/27/01
GameStop.com	Yes	$39.99	6/26/01

all data as of 4/10/01

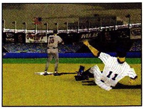
KISS Pinball

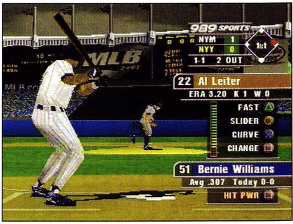
Yeah, so what if it's one of those $10 **Take 2** games and only features two tables—we still can't help but dig the very idea of KISS Pinball. Band members Gene Simmons and Paul Stanley lend their voices to the action...just not any music. However, while you won't "Rock n' Roll All Night" with the default tunes, you still have the option to insert your own CDs for music, KISS or otherwise. Finally, the chance to crank up the Patsy Cline as Ace Frehley regurgitates a silver ball!

KISS
USE DIRECTIONAL BUTTON
TO SCROLL UP AND DOWN

MLB 2002

The 2001 baseball season is already well under way, so we're hoping the extra time taken by **989 Sports** for **Sony CEA** translates into the best outing yet for its MLB series. **This month**, MLB 2002 steps up to the plate with the expected roster updates and new stadiums, along with a TV-style presentation featuring legendary announcer Vin Scully aside ESPN's Dave Campbell. Total Control Fielding allows you to make great defensive plays, like barehanded grabs and twirl throws.

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CHANGE
51 Bernie Williams
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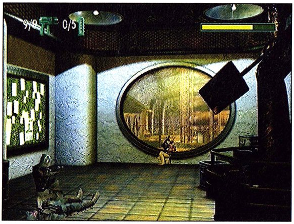
HIT PWR

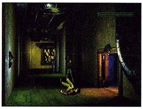
Spec Ops: Ranger Elite

Over the past year, perhaps no game has been the butt of more jokes for us than **Take 2**'s original Spec Ops, one of the very first PS one games to retail for $9.99. But that doesn't mean we're not willing to give Ranger Elite a chance. Once again part of Take 2's bargain-priced "Got Game" line, this sequel requires stealth, skill with weapons (including a sniper rifle) and teamwork (with a friend or the computer) if you hope to achieve victory. Even blast away at a bud if you wish.

In Cold Blood

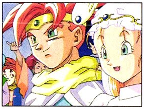
Over the past few months, In Cold Blood's U.S. rights have switched hands from Midway to **DreamCatcher**, a newcomer to the world of PlayStation. But other than that, nothing about this stealth-heavy adventure has changed. As we reported last September, you assume the role of British agent John Cord, playing through the character's flashbacks as he tells his story of nine missions to foreign captors. This **spring** release boasts 60 hours of play and tons of voice work.





Final Fantasy Chronicles

No, your eyes do not deceive you. The screens you see below belong to **Square**'s Chrono Trigger, the acclaimed 1995 Super NES title and precursor to last year's best RPG (arguably...don't get Steinman started), Chrono Cross. The Final Fantasy Chronicles title, however, comes courtesy of Final Fantasy IV's inclusion, which any hardcore RPG fan knows was released here in 1991 as Final Fantasy II (also on SNES). This **summer** compilation includes new CG, as well as other goodies.



Saiyuki: The Journey West

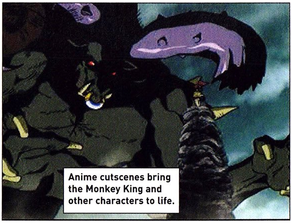
Were it's at

The legend of Saiyuki might not mean much to Westerners such as ourselves, but according to **Koei**, it's pretty big stuff in Asian countries—something every child learns growing up. This **July**, the classic quest of the youthful Chinese monk Sanzo, who attempts to reach India along with a ragtag group of allies, comes to America in the form of Saiyuki: The Journey West (working title). From what we've gathered, gameplay seems to emulate Square's classic Final Fantasy Tactics, with its strategy/ RPG setup perfectly suited for taking on Asra and the Demon Eight, along with any other antagonists who dare cross you. Elemental-based magic plays a large role in your success—particularly Sanzo's ability to call upon Guardians (even more Final Fantasy inspiration?) and his companions' power to morph into their true, "Were" forms. Collect items and experience to build an unbeatable troop.

Attack
Spell
Potion
Summon
Wait
Sanzo

All Hail the Monkey King!

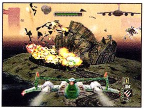
Sanzo's friends each have the ability to transform into powerful animal-based Were forms, like a pig, a fish, a dragon, a butterfly and, perhaps most interestingly, an ape. The latter character of this bunch, commonly known as the "Monkey King" (the legend of Saiyuki is often referred to as this) but actually named Son Goku, served as the basis for a major character in Dragon Ball Z.

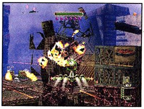


Anime cutscenes bring the Monkey King and other characters to life.

WDL: WarJetz

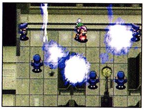
The World Destruction League series from **3DO** ascends to the skies this **June** with blastastic combat aplenty, set across the globe in a postapocalyptic era. Play alone or take on a friend in simultaneous two-player mode.





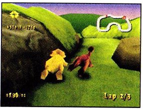
Arc the Lad Collection

As this screen from Arc the Lad 2 indicates, **Working Designs**' oft-delayed compilation of all three games is still happening. "Sometime **this year**," we're told.



The Land Before Time: Great Valley Racing Adv.

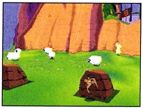
You know you've always wanted to race Littlefoot against three of his prehistoric friends. Thanks to **TDK**, you can do so **now**.

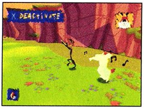


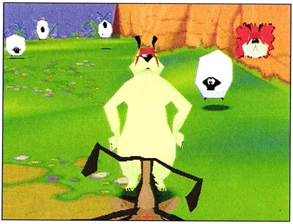
Looney Tunes: Sheep Raider

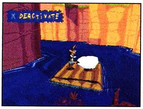
Solid Wolf

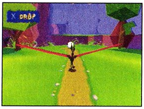
"Best way to describe this," says Jeff Nuzzi, director of marketing at **Infogrames**, "is an E-rated Metal Gear Solid." Formerly titled Sheep, Dog 'N Wolf, this **June** release stars Ralph Wolf, who tirelessly tries to steal sheep from the flock of Sam Sheepdog. Like Solid Snake, Ralph uses a mix of gadgets along with a steady dose of stealth to nab an ewe and lure it to the goal point of the 17 levels. Ralph's got plenty of quality ACME products at his disposal, including jetpacks, dynamite and even sheep perfume. Looney Tunes staples abound, from falling boulders, catapults and leafy bushes to hide in, to guest appearances from Daffy, Porky and other faves.





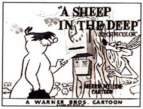


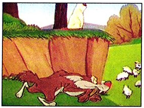




The Toon

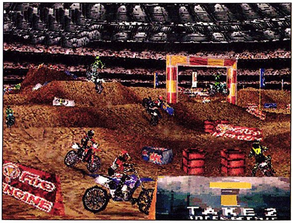
First things first: This isn't Wile E. Coyote that you see here. Note the red nose, which can only mean it's Ralph Wolf. Along with Sam Sheepdog, Ralph starred in a collection of eight classic Looney Tunes capers. The most memorable feature? Despite a steady series of wallopings from Sam, Ralph and the sheepdog always ended the day by punching out a timeclock and exchanging a few pleasantries.





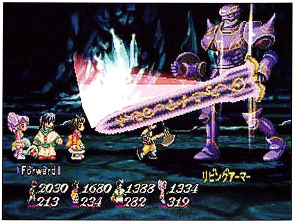
Motocross Mania

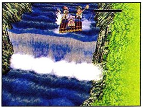
If 30 to 40 bucks has always seemed just a little too much for a PS one motocross game (and based on most of them out there, we don't blame you), **Take 2** might just have what you're after when it releases Motocross Mania for $9.99 this **June**. After all, it does seem to include all of the essentials: motocross, supercross and freestyle tracks of differing terrains (dirt, mud, ice and sand), each featuring shortcuts and huge jumps allowing for some big air.



Tales of Destiny 2

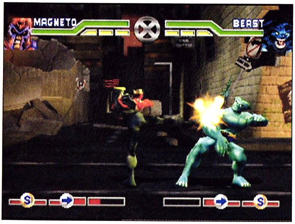
This **fall**, old-school RPG fans have yet another reason to put off that purchase of a PS2, as **Namco** releases the third chapter in the "Tales of..." saga, following Tales of Fantasia and Tales of Destiny. Featuring 2D superdeformed graphics, the Linear Motion Battle system (which mixes real-time button-pressing action with a quasi-turn-based interface), and a long, deep quest (Destiny 1 took up to 70 hours), Destiny 2 should keep fans of the series enthralled for weeks on end.

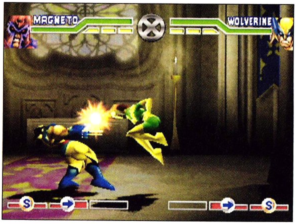




X-Men: Mutant Academy 2

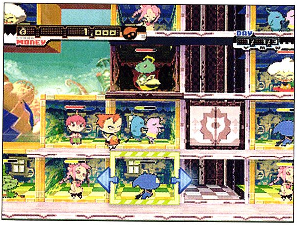
Couldn't get enough brawlin' mutant action last year? This **fall**, Mutant Academy 2 looks to do everything the original did and more, with more characters and better fighting action. Though only Rogue and Havoc have been confirmed as new additions, **Activision** assures that we'll see six new combatants for use in as many new arenas, with aerial combat playing a major role. Just like last time, Professor X teaches you how to use your mutant powers in the Danger Room.





One Piece Mansion

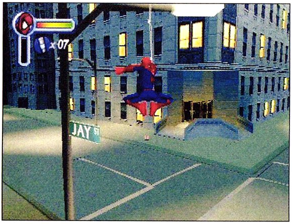
It's not a fighting game. It's not survival horror. It's not even Mega Man. With One Piece Mansion, **Capcom** attempts one of its most unique games to date, as you assume the role of a mansion manager trying to make an honest day's living by leasing out rooms to guests. As your income increases, so does the size of your mansion, leading to even more demanding tenants. The challenge of this humorous simulation/puzzle game lies in keeping them happy. Try it out this **fall**.

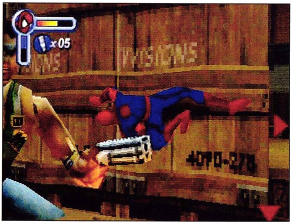


Spider-Man 2 Enter: Electro

Spidey slings back to PS one

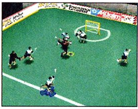
From what little details we've heard of Spider-Man 2, not much has changed from the original—ol' Web Head sets foot into a new adventure replete with new levels and training missions, resulting in plenty of web-slinging and hand-to-hand combat. And that's all perfectly fine with us, seeing as how the original was the best superhero game ever made. This sequel also promises more moves, more web attacks and more fighting combos. But what about more villains? Obviously, Electro enters the picture as the story's chief nemesis, but **Activision** also promises "a whole new lineup of notorious supervillains" for the **fall** release. We can't wait.





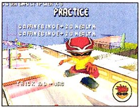
Blast Lacrosse

It may seem hard to believe, but in more than two decades of console gaming, no system's library has *ever* included a lacrosse game. **This month**, **Acclaim** changes that by bringing the long-neglected sport (which, incidentally, precedes baseball, football and basketball by centuries) to your PS one, complete with a license from the indoor National Lacrosse League, now in its fourth year. Gameplay takes on a very NBA Jam-like style, as the five-on-five action even includes Turbo and "On Fire" features.



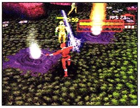
Rocket Power

Based on the Nickelodeon series of the same name, **THQ**'s Rocket Power presents several extreme sports competitions in one package: snowboarding, skateboarding, in-line skating and biking. Tear it up **late this summer**.



Power Rangers Time Force

The most successful kids show and toy line of the '90s returns to PS one this **fall** courtesy of **THQ**. Do that Megazord thing as you travel through time.



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Spyro the Dragon
Demo Disc playables: Metal Gear Solid, Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver, Test Drive 5, Devil Dice, Brunswick Bowling, Ninja, NFL Xtreme, Cool Boarders 3

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Demo Disc playables: MediEvil, WarGames Defcon 1, Dragon Seeds, G-Darius, Future Cop L.A.P.D., Colony Wars Vengeance
non-playables: Crash Bandicoot: WARPED, Tenchu, Tai-Fu, Rugrats, Abe's Exoddus, Brave Fencer Musashi, You Don't Know Jack

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Crash Bandicoot Strategy
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Tomb Raider III Strategy
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Final Fantasy VIII Strategy
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Demo Disc playables: Grandia, Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver, Killer Loop, 40 Winks, NFL Blitz, Crash Bandicoot: WARPED, Cool Boarders 3

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Demo Disc playables: Colony Wars: Red Sun, Spider-Man, Eagle One: Harrier Attack, Hot Shots Golf 2, Rollcage Stage II, Gekido

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Demo Disc playables: MediEvil II, NCAA March Madness 2000, NASCAR Rumble, Speed Punks, Rugrats Studio Tour

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Demo Disc playables: X-Men Mutant Academy, Threads of Fate, WWF SmackDown!, Gauntlet Legends, Grind Session

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Tony Hawk's Pro Skater

Demo Disc playables: Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2, Legend of Dragoon, MLB 2001, Mr. Driller, Star Trek Invasion

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Who Wants to Be a Millionaire

Demo Disc playables: Star Wars Episode 1: Jedi Power Battles, Tenchu 2, WDW: Magical Racing Tour, Destruction Derby Raw, Play with the Teletubbies

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Soul Reaver 2

Demo Disc playables: Grind Session, Rayman 2: The Great Escape, Ms. Pac-Man Maze Madness, Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX, Tyco R/C Racing

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Star Wars

Demo Disc playables: Bust-A-Groove 2, RC Revenge, Team Buddies, Sydney 2000, Muppet Monster Adventure, Sno-Cross Championship Racing

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PS2 Revealed

Demo Disc playables: Crash Bash, Incredible Crisis, Jarrett & LaBonte Stock Car Racing, Spyro: Year of the Dragon, UFC, *plus* Metal Gear Solid 2 video!

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Crash Bash

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Demo Disc playables: Spyro: Year of the Dragon, Star Wars Demolition, Crash Bash, Cool Boarders 2001, You Don't Know Jack, Mort the Chicken

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Twisted Metal: Black

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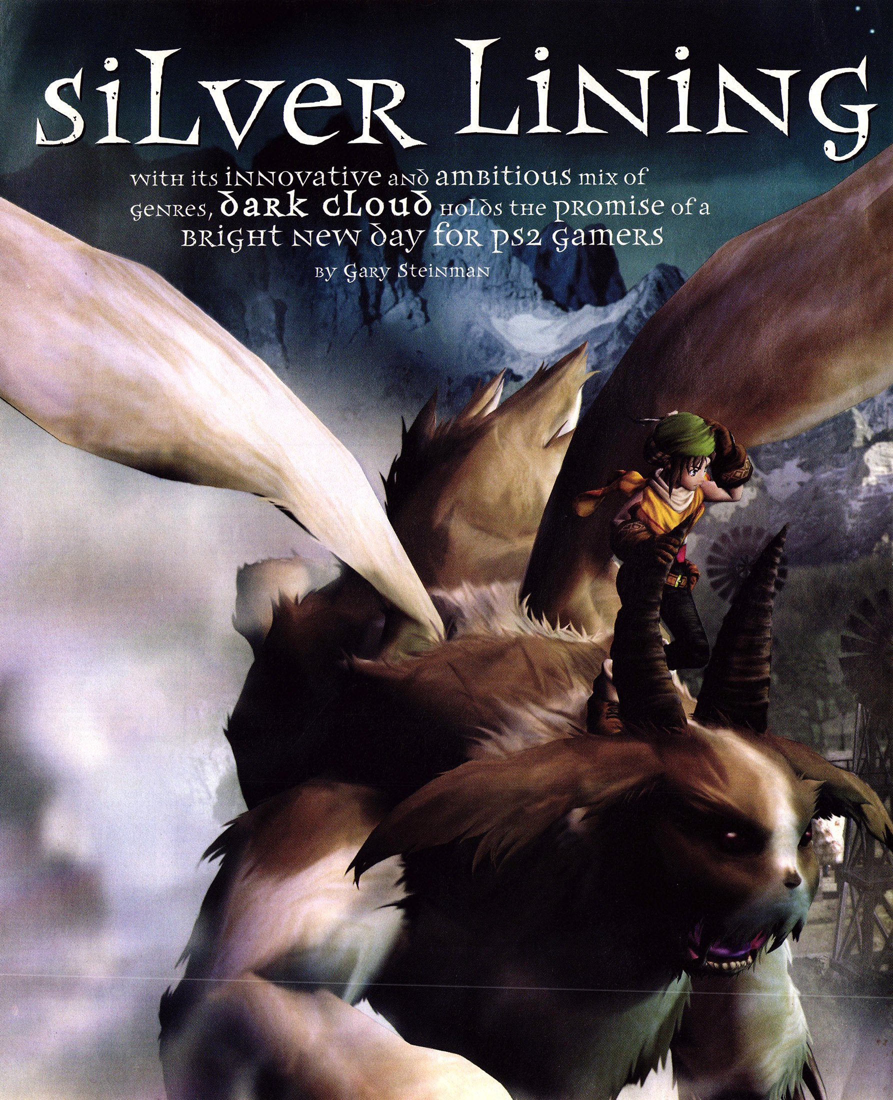
Silver Lining

With its innovative and ambitious mix of genres, Dark Cloud holds the promise of a bright new day for PS2 gamers

By Gary Steinman



Lucky guy.

There you are, kicking back, enjoying another home-cooked meal in your cozy home. But what's that? A knock at the door, and in walks Paige, looking as cute as ever in her white gown. "It's already started!" she exclaims. "Come on, let's go."

You slurp down the rest of your food and rush out of the house to the town square to enjoy a balmy evening of dancing, singing, revelry—and who knows what else. Life is good. Yep, it don't get much better than this.

Of course, every silver lining has a dark cloud skulking in the wings—and this time it comes in the form of a fat, blue genie lurking in the sky above, carrying the dastardly Colonel Flag in his hand. "Look, the fools are making noises," sneers Col. Flag. "Start from there." A sinister ballet follows, with the Dark Genie twirling, spinning, arms flailing, destructive bolts hurtling toward your innocent little hamlet.

And there you are, ready for a good time, but instead you're confronted with mass destruction, your town in flames, houses razed, neighbors scattered, running for their lives. Out of the corner of your eyes you see Paige knocked to the ground, crying out for help. A windmill is about to crash down upon her. Adrenaline courses through your veins. You run to her, leap beneath the falling tower. A selfless act, a heroic deed—but it's too late. The world goes black.

But all is not lost. Right before the utter devastation, the Spirit King captured everything from your town—houses, fences, people, llamas, ponds, rivers, knickknacks, trees—encapsulated them, and scattered them throughout a local cave. The village has been spared, safely spirited away, hidden from the evil plans of the big-nosed Col. Flag.

And now it's all up to you. Yes, you're the chosen one, the last hope. The Spirit King has picked you to be the one to slog through endless dungeons, seeking lost pieces of your town, fighting countless enemies, rebuilding your world, and bulking up your strength for the inevitable conflagration with the Dark Genie himself.

A daunting task, indeed. And just what are your unique qualifications, you ask? Let's see...You still live at home with your mother. You're an all-around nice guy, always willing to help a neighbor. You wear a silly hat that looks like a turban with sweat socks stapled to it. You have a, well, wimpy build. You're a young man of very few words. Yep, all the right characteristics for a world-saving hero.

But now's not the time to reflect. The fate of the world rests on your slight shoulders. It's up to you to rebuild, restructure, restore. Heck, you've got the chance to make the world even better than before. It won't be easy, to be sure, but someone has to do it.

Lucky guy.

HOW TO: PLAY DARK CLOUD

Being a hero isn't all guts and glory. You'll need plenty of strength along with a healthy dose of wits to save the world. You'll need a sharp blade. And you can't do it alone—you'll need a few friends. But most of all, you'll need to figure out that whole "Georama" thing. Don't worry, we're here for ya. We'll walk you through all the mechanics of Dark Cloud, including the basics of rebuilding your town. We've got all the info you need to get through the beginning of the game. Now wipe that goofy look off your face and go to work.

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Gee. It's quite different than I expected.
Look, the fools are making ... Start from there.
Town!
You saw it, your own village be...

Build it, Live it, pLay it

Bunbuku needs a place to hang his laundry. Mayor Baron needs a handsome little branch to complete his home. And Couscous would love some grass to plant on the roof of his house—it's just a nice little touch that'll make the big fella happy.

Sure, the world is on the verge of mass destruction. Not their problem. Villages have been completely wiped out, leaving empty fields devoid of life. No matter. The nearby forest—once a place that was safe to visit—is teeming with hostile monsters. Oh well, can't be bothered. Seems everybody wants something, and they'd like it sooner rather than later, if you please. *I'd like to have my house on higher ground. I want to be surrounded by water. Put me near Momo's house—she sure is cute. I'd like to hear the sounds of leaves rustling—they inspire me.* On and on and on.

So what do you do? Shake the collective shoulders of the townspeople and shout at them until they see the stark reality of their situation? Ignore them and simply go on with your quest? No, you're the hero, so you tighten your turban and trudge back into the Wise Owl Forest in search of more Atla, those pieces of the world that the Spirit King has spirited away from the evil eyes of the Dark Genie. You fight the monsters. You collect the Atla. You return to Poacher Village and continue to rebuild the town. Heck, why quit there? You toil endlessly, day and night, to make the world even better than before.

And therein lies one of the great charms of Dark Cloud. Despite the fact that you'll spend as much time fighting in dungeons as you will laboring outside of them, and despite the fact that the Dark Genie has destroyed your village along with many others, the real focus here is on rebuilding the world. Gone are the moody characters and the gloomy plot lines typical of many of these games. In their stead, Dark Cloud offers a lighthearted, almost cheerful journey, a story of rebirth and rebuilding, of new life and new hope. There's a sense of wonder and awe surrounding the whole game, as if you're

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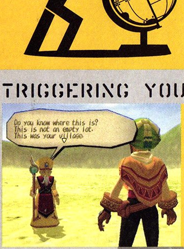
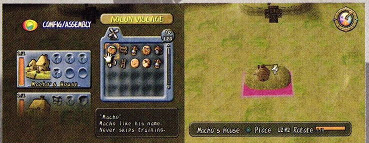
TRIGGERING YOUR FIRST EVENT



Do you know where this is?
This is not an empty lot.
This was your village

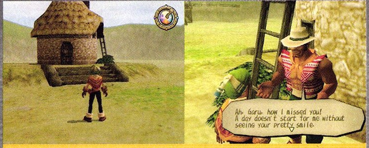
The village is decimated. All that's left is an empty field. (Well, there's the mayor and his house, which somehow escaped the carnage. Politicians—go figure.) Your first priority is to collect pieces of Atla from the Divine Beast Cave. As soon as you complete the second level of the Cave, you should have just enough Atla to rebuild Macho's house. We'll start there.



"Macho"
Macho like his name.
Never skips training.

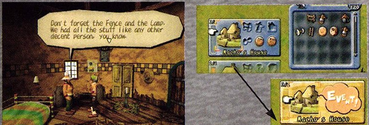
Macho's House ⊗ Place L2 R2 Rotate

Pop into the Assembly menu, and you'll see a handful of Foundation Parts on the left (houses, windmills, shrubs, roads, rivers) and other Parts on the right (people, lamps, ladders, fences). Macho's house has six spots to place various Parts. Four of them are question marks; you can't put anything there yet. Put Macho and Komacho in those final two spots, then place the house on the field. Don't worry where you put it—it doesn't matter yet, and you can always move the house later.



Ah, Garu, how I missed you!
A day doesn't start for me without seeing your pretty smile.

Now return to the village, and voilá—Macho's house. Look around for Macho and his brother. At this particular hour, Macho happens to be lounging outside his house, with his brother inside. Depending on the time of day, though, the two of them may be anywhere from indoors to outside wandering about. Seems Macho is particularly pleased to see you...Overly friendly? Creepy? You be the judge!

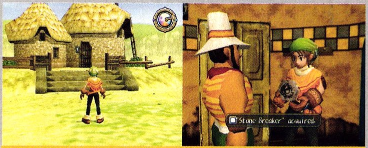


Don't forget the Fence and the Lamp.
We had all the stuff like any other decent person, you know.

Ask Macho how to make a house, and he'll say he wants a bigger room and his barbell outside. Komacho wants a fence and a lamp, like "any other decent person." Back to the Assembly menu. See how those question marks are now four spots that match the requested items? Since you have them, put the Parts into the correct slots (even a toddler can do this!), and a bubble will appear saying "Event!"

HOW TO: BUILD A BETTER WORLD

You're no Frank Lloyd Wright, sure. Heck, you're probably not even handy enough to build yourself a backyard grill. But that shouldn't stop you from enjoying Dark Cloud's innovative Georama feature, in which you not only rebuild towns from the ground up, but you've got to plot out the environs with all the savvy of an Ivy League-educated urban planner. For such a deep, involving gameplay mechanic, it's actually quite straightforward—at least at first. Nonetheless, we'll walk you through everything you need to know to rebuild your own Nolun Village. After that, you're on your own.



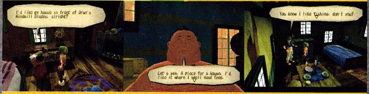
Back to the field. Check out Macho's digs: twice as big, with a fence surrounding it, a barbell outside and a lamp hanging by the door. Pretty cool. Now step inside and a scripted sequence unfolds. Komacho offers you a Stone Breaker as a reward for your hard work—and just in time, as the next level of the cave is swarming with some rock-hard Statue monsters. Attach this plate to your weapon for a slight advantage when squaring off against these foes.

URBAN PLANNING

So you built a few houses and collected some useful rewards. Big whoop. Now comes the tricky part—you've got to arrange the town *juuuust* right so that everyone will be happy. It may take a village to raise a child, but now it's up to a poncho-wearing child to rebuild the village.

Move
Remove

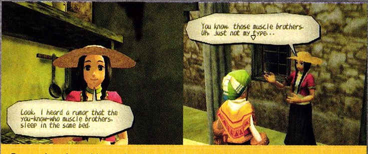
You've collected all the Atla and completed all the event sequences. What you've got, though, isn't really a village; rather, it's a collection of hovels set randomly in a field. There's also the problem of placing roads, rivers, windmills and trees. What to do? Wander through town chatting with everyone to find out what they want, then figure out a way to make them happy.


I'd like my house in front of Dran's Windmill Blades, alright?

Let's see. A place for a house. I'd like it where I smell good food.

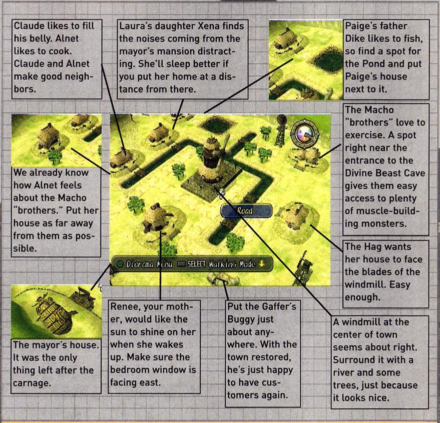
You know I like fishing, don't you?

Requests range from straightforward to the slightly more challenging.


Look, I heard a rumor that the you-know-who muscle brothers, sleep in the same bed.

You know, those muscle brothers. Uh, just not my type...

Remember that odd greeting from Macho? And the way he and his "brother" are constantly playfighting? Well, it's confirmed—Macho and Komacho are in fact a bit "light in the loafers." Not that there's anything wrong with that. Either way, Alnet wants to keep a healthy distance from Macho's house.



Claude likes to fill his belly. Alnet likes to cook. Claude and Alnet make good neighbors.

Laura's daughter Xena finds the noises coming from the mayor's mansion distracting. She'll sleep better if you put her home at a distance from there.

Paige's father Dike likes to fish, so find a spot for the Pond and put Paige's house next to it.

We already know how Alnet feels about the Macho "brothers." Put her house as far away from them as possible.

The Macho "brothers" love to exercise. A spot right near the entrance to the Divine Beast Cave gives them easy access to plenty of muscle-building monsters.

The Hag wants her house to face the blades of the windmill. Easy enough.

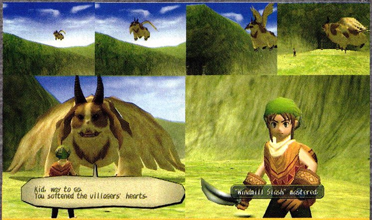
The mayor's house. It was the only thing left after the carnage.

Renee, your mother, would like the sun to shine on her when she wakes up. Make sure the bedroom window is facing east.

Put the Gaffer's Buggy just about anywhere. With the town restored, he's just happy to have customers again.

A windmill at the center of town seems about right. Surround it with a river and some trees, just because it looks nice.

Here's one way to set up Nolun Village that'll make everyone happy. But this is just the way *we* did it. You can probably structure it much differently if you want!

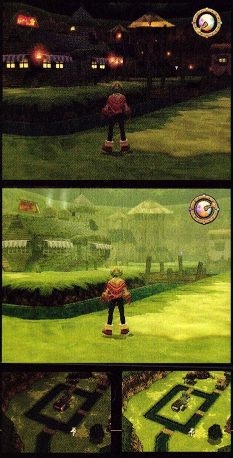

Kid, way to go. You softened the villagers' hearts.

"Windmill Slash" mastered.

That wasn't too difficult, was it? So what's the payoff for all your efforts? Dran shows up to thank you for completing the town, and awards you with a new special Charge attack. Pretty nice. But you'd be sadly mistaken if you think it's all gonna be this easy. The next town holds a host of new challenges that go far beyond simple urban planning. It's gonna be quite a bit more difficult to make those residents happy. And you won't just be rebuilding towns—we don't want to give it away, but let's just say that Dark Cloud has a few surprises in store for you!

Night and day

Dark Cloud's world changes dramatically to accurately reflect the time of day. What's more, this is even represented in the overworld menu/map screen!



waking up to a bright new day, warm sun shining on you, full of hope and energy and vitality.

But that's not the only sweet thing about Dark Cloud. In fact, the game is imbued with a remarkable yet surprising charm that extends to all its parts, from the graphics to the story to the gameplay itself.

Long time coming

All this from a game that's been kicking around for what seems like an eternity. Screenshots of Dark Cloud were among the very first released when the PS2 was unveiled in Japan—an event we covered 17 months ago in our November 1999 issue. Dubbed a Georama game, Dark Cloud offered an ambitious yet puzzling mix of world-building and role-playing elements. In our next issue, we ran a longer preview, and at the time we set the game's "buzz factor" at seven (on a scale of 10), with the following comment: "Intriguing idea, but how exactly will it play?"

Since then, we've highlighted the game several more times in these pages, but without too much new information on how everything actually works together. Sure, we learned about randomly generated dungeons and the Zelda-like combat system. And we knew that you could build towns and villages, then immediately zoom in and play in newly constructed areas. But we were still scratching our noggins trying to get a handle on this one. All the while, though, anticipation continued to grow for this intriguing title.

Fast forward to last December, when the game was finally released in Japan. Dark Cloud met with moderate reviews among the Japanese gaming press and a chilly reception among games buyers, leading some here to wonder if the game was released too early. Cynical gamers speculated that Dark Cloud was incomplete, lacking several key features that were omitted due to deadline pressures. Meanwhile hardcore import gamers bought the Japanese version, and were met with even more puzzlement. Dark Cloud clearly wasn't the type of title that's easy on the import gamer, a point that Sony CEA associate product manager Ron Eagle is quick to make. "With the Japanese version of Dark Cloud, unless you're absolutely fluent, the whole combining of magical elements to upgrade weapons is counterintuitive in somebody else's language," Eagle says, referring to just one of the many aspects of Dark Cloud's complex gameplay.

But here's the good news: We've gotten our hands on a translated rev of Dark Cloud, and we're thrilled to report that it easily lives up to the early hype, and in some ways goes far beyond. Even better, Dark Cloud has been significantly upgraded for the U.S. release (more on that later). What was once puzzling now makes perfect sense—Dark Cloud is an intuitive experience that eases you in to its world with an extremely gentle learning curve that belies its massive depth.

Mmmmm....
What happened to me?
And who are you...?

For a detailed look at how Dark Cloud works, check out our handy how-to sidebars. But in more general terms, Dark Cloud's gameplay is wholly unique in the way it blends genres like a master chef mixing diverse ingredients, offering up a heady stew of tasty treats that all manage to work together. And while each of Dark Clouds sundry parts—real-time dungeon-crawling, story-driven role-playing, strategic world-building—is almost good enough to stand alone, they're intricately intertwined and all integral to the game.

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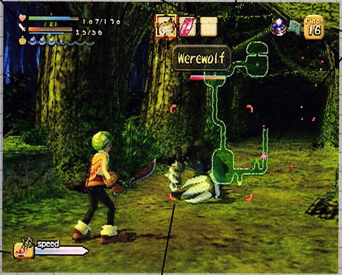
HOW TO: FIGHT LIKE A CHAMP

With a hat like Toan's, that boy had to learn how to fight at a young age. Even in his tight little village, we're sure the schoolyard bully just couldn't resist such an easy target. But for those of you who haven't yet honed your pugilistic tendencies, here's a look at how the fighting works.



Not only do you have to worry about your hit points, but you've also got a thirst meter. If you get too parched, your life meter begins to drain away. Always carry extra water with you. Your weapon also has hit points, although you can fix it up with some handy Repair Powder.

You can set up to three items in the Active bar here. These range from attack items to healing and defensive items.

The name of the monster is displayed, along with its life bar below.

The dungeon's map fills in as you explore the floor you're on. Each level (aside from boss floors and a few other special ones) also has a Map along with a Magical Crystal, which shows the position of all the enemies (red dots), treasure chests (yellow dots) and Atla (green dots). The top-right bar shows that you're on floor 16 and that you have the Magical Crystal, but no Map yet. To clear a level of a dungeon, you have to find a special item that lets you move to the next floor. After you complete a floor, you can either continue on or leave the dungeon to return later.

Your weapon's speed meter determines how quickly you can swing your sword in succession, or whether you can pull off a combo attack. Don't go rushing an enemy if this meter is empty, as you won't be able to pull off your attack.

A Zelda-esque lock-on targeting system makes it easy to focus on the foe at hand.

Hee hee hee... You dig here.

ONE AT A TIME

Multiple enemies? No worries. You can quickly switch between monsters that you've locked on to with a quick button press, or if you have a character with a long-range attack, you pick them off from a distance.

EarthDigger

KNOW YOUR STRENGTHS

Once you collect a few allies, be sure to use them. Goro, for example, has a special attack that's best-suited for taking on those pesky Earth Diggers in the Owl Forest. You also need to keep your allies in shape, in case they're ever called on...

How your action is limited depends on the location.

KNOW YOUR LIMITS

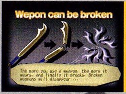
Certain dungeon floors place restrictions on you. You can't switch your weapons. You get thirsty quicker. You can only use a certain character. Always be prepared, as these limit floors pop up without any warning.

ADJUST TO YOUR ENEMIES

Enter a new dungeon, or complete a few levels, and you're bound to face new types of monsters. Be sure to upgrade your weapon to deal with these foes; otherwise, your attacks may be too weak and your weapon may take too much damage.

DRINK PLENTY OF WATER

A properly hydrated warrior is a happy warrior. While in the dungeons, look for pools of water, which restore both health and thirst. And be sure to call forth all of your allies while there so you can quench their thirst as well.



Wepon can be broken

The more you use a weapon, the more it wears, and finally it breaks. Broken weapons will disappear...

HANDLE WITH CARE

It's easy to forget that your sword has feelings too. You should never, ever, ever let your weapon become so damaged that it breaks. You not only lose all the work you put in to building it up, but you also lose the weapon itself.

GO THROUGH THE BACK DOOR

Each dungeon has a back area that appears at random. You'll need a hard-to-find item to gain access to it, but once there you'll be treated to plenty of rare, valuable treasures. But be warned: The enemies are much tougher there.

FOREST KEEPER
MASTERUTAN

BEAT THE BOSS

Boss characters require you to switch between your allies on the fly, using their different strengths and attack methods to vanquish the beasts. Don't try to tussle with these mighty foes all by yourself or you'll meet with sure defeat.

Throughout the game you'll be challenged with occasional Duels—major event battles that use timed button presses to trigger scripted sequences. They're not too difficult, but they're a joy to watch.

It's this convergence of genres that's one of developer Level-5's most remarkable achievements, claims Eagle. "I think Dark Cloud represents that 'first of,' where we start talking about this fusion of genres taking place throughout the marketplace," Eagle says. "Where you start to see because of the technological advances within the PlayStation 2 hardware, that you can take what might have been too ambitious with the PlayStation in terms of programming and space on the disc and such, and you can blend the action, adventure, real-time strategy, RPG into one kind of game."

Real-time Beauty

All these "technological advances" aren't being squandered away on the gameplay, though. Equally as impressive are Dark Cloud's graphics. From little details like the rippling of water or the way Toan's cloak flutters and flows as he runs through the world, to the utter lack of load times or pop-up when you place houses, trees, rivers, windmills and the like in the environment, Dark Cloud has enough eye-candy to sweeten up even the most jaded gamers. That's something the development team worked hard to achieve. "We have concentrated on providing very detailed graphics," says producer Akihiro Hino. "We especially concentrated on perfecting elements such as the sway of water or the texture of cloth materials. This would be an example of how we have maximized the performance of the PS2 hardware."

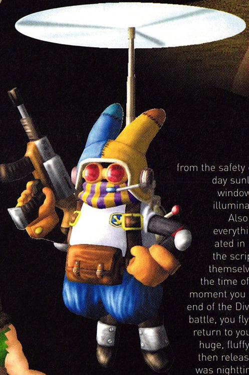
And yet the graphics probably won't blow you away—at first, that is. "In Dark Cloud, we have used such effects casually, and hope players will notice them," says Hino. "Try checking the map area in detail." Indeed, as that great sage Yogi Berra might say, you can see a lot just by looking. Try, for example, standing in one place for a full day. No, not in real life. Take Toan and place him in a fairly crowded area of one of your villages. And then just stand there. As the time passes, day will turn to night, the sky will darken, the moon will rise. As the night crawls on torches flare, piercing the dusk. Lights go on inside various homes, shining out through the windows. And as the morning sun wakens once again, chimney smoke will begin to billow out of houses as the residents relight their hearths. Now pop into the first-person view and peek at the sky, and you'll actually see the sun moving through the atmosphere. At the right angle, lens flare assaults your eyes. Stand around long enough and eventually you'll gaze at the two moons westering across the sky. Now go inside, and you can watch the same effect from the safety of your home. During the day sunlight will seep through the windows, while at night torches illuminate your home from within.

Also striking is the fact that everything in Dark Cloud is generated in real time. Everything. Even the scripted sequences, which themselves change depending on the time of day. Take, for example, the moment you defeat the first boss at the end of the Divine Beast Cave. After the battle, you fly out of the dungeon and return to your village with Dran, a huge, fluffy beast that you fought and then released from an evil spell. It was nighttime when we first defeated Dran, and as you'd expect we came home under cover of night. But later, purely on chance, we replayed this boss fight during the daytime, and were pleasantly surprised to see the sun sparkling in the sky above as we glided back to our village. We even noticed that the sword we were using (a different one from the first fight) was accurately reflected in this scripted sequence.

And then there's the whole world-building element. Pop into an overworld-style map screen, grab a house, and set it down just about anywhere there's an open spot. With one tap of the Dual Shock, you're back in the world, and that house is right there. No delay. No load time. As solid as if it's always been there. Now let's say you finally found that laundry line for Bunbuku. Back to the menu, where you can place it onto his house, and—bang!—it's right there. Now, just for kicks, pick up Bunbuku's house and move it. Or put some trees in Bunbuku's backyard. Or give him some neighbors. Or wend a river around his house. Whatever. The point is, you can do it, and then you can see the results—you can *explore* the results—within milliseconds. A remarkable graphical achievement, to be sure, but one that's also a satisfying and innovative gameplay feature, according to Sony CEA's Eagle.

"This Georama—I can't overstate—is really unique in the sense that you are rebuilding something that was lost, as far as the storyline goes," Eagle gushes. "You grab, for instance, Paige's house, and you plop Paige into her house, and you plop it into the environment, and I just think it's really, really cool that you can drop that anywhere you wish, and then immediately—and I mean immediately—drop yourself into that world and open the door and Paige is inside. It's all fully rendered, fully ready to go, there's no pop-up, no draw-in, no load time at all."

"If I'd like the gamers to walk away with anything from playing Dark Cloud," Eagle continues, "it'd be the amazement that I feel that this is technically possible now. This can still be considered a first-generation product, so imagine what can be done after you have time to tweak that or apply it to something else. I'm floored by it because, being the old 16-bit and 8-bit gamer, and having to watch load screens even on some of the better PS2 titles, and waiting for things to happen, for that to be there in such a beautifully rendered environment, real-time, immediately right then and there...it blows me away."



The Allies

You can team up with five other playable characters, including Xiao (above), Osmond (right) and Goro (below).

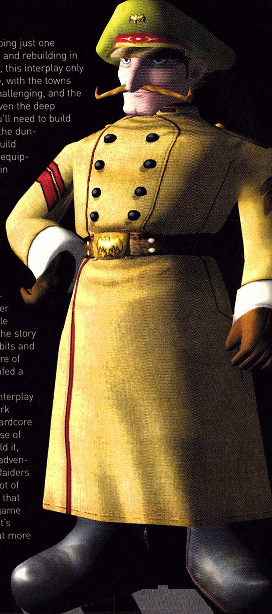
perfect balance

Even after reading our how-to sidebars, you might still be wondering how all these diverse elements come together. And that may be the real beauty of this game. While Dark Cloud contains so many competing gameplay mechanics, they all work together seamlessly. How so? Let's start from the beginning. After a series of story sequences, you find yourself in an empty field that was once your village. Your first task is to rebuild that village and seek out the help of the Divine Beast Dran. So you head off to the Divine Beast Den to fight through 15 levels of a randomly generated dungeon, picking up pieces of Atla along the way. After completing each level of the dungeon, you can return to your village and use the Atla you've accumulated to reconstruct and repopulate your 'hood. When you're done playing around in the village, you can head back to the dungeon and pick up right at the next level.

But here's the neat part. These two unique gameplay elements play off of each other magnificently, balancing each other out by constantly introducing new elements that can be used in the other arena. Finish reconstructing a home, and the resident may give you an item that'll help you get through the next level of the dungeon. Fight through another level in the dungeon, and you're rewarded with that last piece you need to fully furnish your neighbor's house. You're never stuck for too long doing just one thing. Indeed, you're required to switch between fighting and rebuilding in order to make your way through the game. What's more, this interplay only becomes more integral as you get further into the game, with the towns becoming more intricate, the puzzles becoming more challenging, and the dungeons becoming much more difficult to complete. Even the deep weapons management system is well-integrated, as you'll need to build up your swords and axes and slingshots to get through the dungeons, which in turn allows you to gain more Atla to rebuild towns—but you still won't be able to get the latest, best equipment without then completing some new requirements in the various villages you're rebuilding.

The story also unfolds through this interplay of gameplay, with plot sequences occurring in both the dungeons and the outside world. Each new person you bring back to the world will offer some new piece of information. Each bit of information somehow adds to your understanding of that town you're in, or the quest you're on, or the specific goal you need to achieve. As you accomplish things within the dungeons, changes will occur in the related town. And as you complete your goals in rebuilding the town, you'll gain greater access to new weapons, new allies (there are six playable characters, by the way) and new areas. And that's how the story unfolds—the game is fairly light on text, but these little bits and pieces add up, and suddenly you realize that you're aware of much more about this world without having to be spoonfed a tome worth of text.

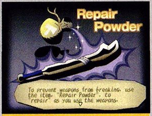
For Sony's Eagle, having a game with such a broad interplay of elements is key to reaching new audiences. "With Dark Cloud, it really is a unique proposition," he says. "The hardcore RPG audience is obviously going to get the game because of the strategic elements of the Georama feature—the build it, live it, play it aspect. The other piece to it would be the adventure gamers who might be a little more into the Tomb Raiders or the Crash series; they're going to see that there's a lot of real-time combat action in it. That it's not so text-heavy that you feel you have to be an RPG fan to play it. With this game you've got the immersive character-driven storyline that's going to really capture the RPG audience—it's there. But more importantly, I think that we can reach out and hopefully extend the category."



(continued on p. 94)

HOW TO: FORGE A FEARSOME WEAPON

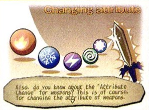
A fighter is only as good as his best weapon. Without the right sword, the best axe, the most powerful slingshot, you won't be able to get past all those pesky monsters skulking in the dungeons. Dark Cloud features an extremely deep weapons management system (think Vagrant Story, and you'll get a good idea of how it works here), which lets you customize your cutlery and even evolve your blades into entirely new weapons. You'll spend plenty of time fiddling with your weapons in order to get things just right. You have to stay sharp when you're a hero—but don't worry, we're here to help you.



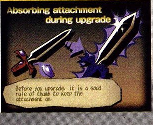
To prevent weapons from breaking, use the item, "Repair Powder", to "repair" as you use the weapons.

Always keep a good stock of Repair Powder on hand—you'll need it to maintain your weapons. Why not just let them break? Because the only way to have the most powerful blades is by letting them grow over time. Not only can you customize your weapons' characteristics by adding various stones to them, but they also gain levels and get stronger the more you use them. And if you develop them properly, your weapons can evolve into valuable and otherwise unattainable forms.

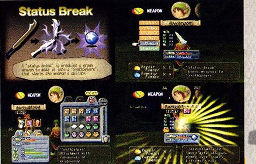
Each weapon has a ridiculous amount of characteristics that you can upgrade. First, you've got items that simply boost your weapon's Attack, Endurance, Agility or Magic. Then there are the elemental attributes (Flame, Chill, Thunder, Wind, Sacred), which lend their power to your weapon's attacks; these too can be amplified. Finally, you've got 10 monster-specific categories you can boost (Dino, Undead, Fish, Rock, Plant, Beast, Flyer, Metal, Mimic, Wizard); the higher your level in each one, the more damage you'll do to those types of monsters. So how do you get all these attachments? Some are gifts given by grateful townsfolk, some are treasures found in the dungeons and some can be bought. Also, if you use an object (like a bomb or a lightning gem) to kill a monster, that creature will often leave behind an item that can be used as an attachment. Finally, Dark Cloud has a fishing minigame that lets you trade in Fish Points for these items.



Also, do you know about the "Attribute Change" for weapons? This is of course, for changing the attribute of weapons.



Before you upgrade, it is a good rule of thumb to keep the attachment on.



A "status break" is breaking a grown weapon to make it into a "SynthSphere" that shares the weapon's ability.

"Status Break" Change weapons to "SynthSphere"

Let's say you've been building up a sword for a while, only to receive a new blade that's more powerful on Level 1 than your current one is at Level 12. Time wasted? Nope. Perform a Status Break on your older sword, which turns it into an attachment containing a portion of all of its abilities. Add that attachment to your new sword and you'll get a major boost across the board. Also, since some weapons have hard-to-develop characteristics, you can strategically build them up with the intention of performing a Status Break, thus yielding a valuable attachment for a different weapon.

New & improved

Still, Sony's not taking any chances here. As we mentioned earlier, the U.S. version will receive a significant upgrade. According to Seth Luisi, Dark Cloud's U.S. producer, these changes will include: 35 additional weapons, nine new items, 18 new monsters, two new bosses (and an additional form for the last boss), one new duel/event battle, 11 new fish for the fishing minigame, a revised lock-on targeting system, a new chest quiz character that offers you a choice between items, mystery circles that can help or harm your character, new expanded combo attacks for Toan and Ungaga, enhanced enemy AI, an enhanced weapons system, Demon Shaft (a bonus 100-floor dungeon), along with lots of other minor changes. In other words, "about 30 percent more data altogether," Luisi sums up. Or to put it in different terms, Eagle estimates that you could finish the Japanese version in 35-40 hours. "But now it'll take you closer to 50-55 hours if you're hardcore," he says.

We've played through a good 20 hours of the work-in-progress, and have seen firsthand some of these changes. Two of the most significant upgrades are with the revised lock-on system and the tougher enemy AI, which together add to the challenge of the battles while making them more manageable. "The game difficulty doesn't just come from increasing the parameters of the enemy," explains Hino, "it comes from increasing the intelligence of the enemy. So now you have to be quicker than them to beat them." Luisi notes that this was done with the U.S. audience in mind. "The biggest North American-specific change we made was to improve the combat system and enemy AI. North American gamers tend to be older than Japanese gamers and like a more challenging, in-depth game." It's a nice addition, to be sure.

But, as Hino told us, "It's not often that you see a Japanese title converted to the U.S. and Europe with this much improvement overall." Which raises the question: Why was this released in what could be considered an unfinished form? "It's always the case with game development that you have to stop at some point and release the game, but you always have additional ideas that you wanted to include in the final product," Luisi explains. "SCEI and the Dark Cloud team felt it was the right time to release Dark Cloud in Japan when they did, as there were no strong RPGs on the market at that time. Since they had additional time for the North American and European versions, they had the chance to add some of the features that they didn't have time to complete for the Japanese version. We are very grateful that they were able to do this."

I can hold a lot, under my butt...!

Eagle agrees, adding, "I think that Japan was committed at the very beginning to trying to make even more of the game than they were able to make, and because of the deadline they had to meet in Japan, they weren't able to put in some of the stuff that they would have liked to. And with us, they had the opportunity to do so."

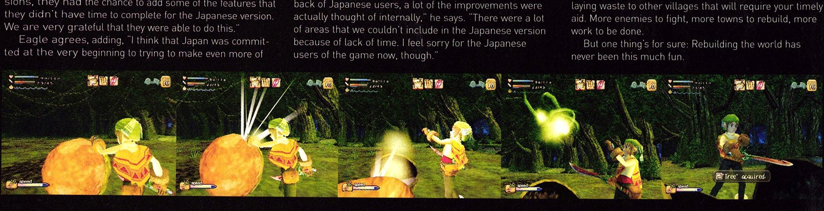
As for Hino, he concurs that many of these upgrades were spurred from within, and aren't necessarily based on response from Japanese gamers. "Aside from the feedback of Japanese users, a lot of the improvements were actually thought of internally," he says. "There were a lot of areas that we couldn't include in the Japanese version because of lack of time. I feel sorry for the Japanese users of the game now, though."

Finally, we can't help but wonder about a sequel. Will Dark Cloud become a major PlayStation franchise, along the lines of Final Fantasy and The Legend of Zelda (which Hino readily acknowledges was a major influence on his game)? At this point Sony CEA is tight-lipped about the possibility, with much of the decision likely resting on factors like sales numbers and review scores. And Hino is equally coy, saying, "We hope there will be a sequel, but we can't confirm anything."

Still, in a presentation at the recent Tokyo Game Show, Hino was more forthcoming. "Yes there will be a sequel, but in terms of where we are with it, we can't comment right now," he said. "All I can tell you right now is that the graphics for the next game in the series will be amazing."

From his comments, we can safely assume that Level-5 is already hard at work on a follow-up to Dark Cloud. Which brings us back to our own toils. After much searching through the Wise Owl Forest, we finally found Bunbuku's laundry line, Mayor Baron's handsome branch, and some grass for the roof of Couscous's house. But there's no time to rest, as the requests from recently restored villagers continue to pour in. Meanwhile, the Dark Genie is wreaking havoc elsewhere in the world, laying waste to other villages that will require your timely aid. More enemies to fight, more towns to rebuild, more work to be done.

But one thing's for sure: Rebuilding the world has never been this much fun.



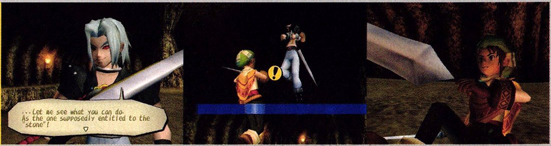
HOW TO: WIN FRIENDS AND INFLUENCE PEOPLE

Being a hero may be a lonely proposition, but that doesn't mean you have to save the world all by yourself. If you want to make it through Dark Cloud, you'll need some help.

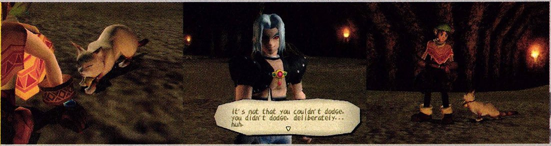
A FRIEND IN NEED...

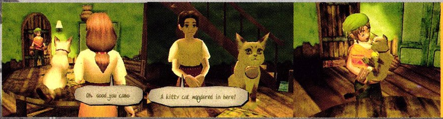
Your first pal is pretty easy to come by—you basically stumble upon her and save her life, thereby winning her companionship throughout your journey. Remember that cute cat you saw on the second and sixth level of the Divine Beast Cave? Well, she's the one, and she appears again on the eighth level of the Cave. Here's how it all goes down:

On that eighth level, you'll run into a mysterious stranger. Is he good? Is he evil? Is he in serious need of Visine? All valid questions, but before you can get an answer, he challenges you to a Duel. No matter how well you fight, he still manages to fell you with a mighty blast of magic. But as he stands holding his sword over you, the stranger makes a startling discovery...


...Let me see what you can do. As the one supposedly entitled to the "stone"!

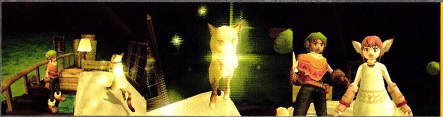
Seems you deliberately bore the brunt of his blow in order to protect that helpless cat cowering behind you. Ahhh, isn't that sweet. "I think I'm beginning to know why the Spirits chose you," he says before he tosses you a bottle of Changing Potion and disappears. Seconds later, lightning strikes the precious feline, transforming her into an Atla.


It's not that you couldn't dodge. You didn't dodge, deliberately... huh.

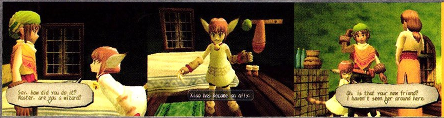

Oh, good you came.
A kitty cat wandered in here!

A FRIEND INDEED

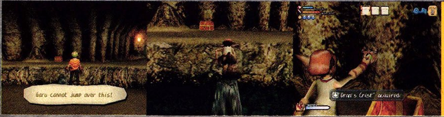
Leave the dungeon with the Stray Cat Atla in hand. It should be the final piece you need to finish your own house and trigger an Event. Step into your home, and you'll learn that the cat has wandered inside and has taken quite a shine to you!



Hop upstairs to your room (you know it's yours since it's got a spare poncho, turban and pair of goofy boots). There's that cat again, lounging on your bed. Use the Changing Potion on her, and watch the transformation happen. Out pops Xiao, a bright-eyed and somewhat befuddled cat girl.


Say, how did you do it? Master, are you a wizard?
Xiao has become an ally.
Oh, is that your new friend? I haven't seen her around here.

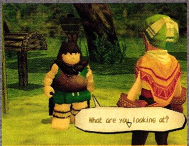
After Xiao gets over her surprise, she declares that she "wants to help master with the adventure." She's a persistent one, and won't take no for an answer. You won't be able to call on Xiao when you're wandering through the world, but she's an invaluable ally during your time in the dungeons.


Goro cannot jump over this!
"Dran's Crest" acquired.

So just what can our cat girl Xiao do for you? The most obvious thing is her jumping ability. Right back on the eighth level of the Cave is a gap too far for you to leap over. Quickly switch to Xiao, and she skips across, grabbing Dran's Crest for you and clearing that level.

Cave Bat
speed

Xiao also wields a slingshot, making her especially useful when facing flying monsters or when you need to pick off enemies from a distance. Be sure to use her now and then to keep her in shape, as you'll come across several levels in the Cave and elsewhere that force you to use only her.


What are you looking at?

ANIMAL MAGNETISM?

You'd think from your first foray into making friends that just about anyone would jump into your arms to join you. Alas, not so. Take Goro, the next of your four remaining allies. Not only does he have no interest in teaming up with you, but he also makes it abundantly clear that he'd rather fight you than befriend you. It's gonna take a lot more work to win him over!

GAMES REVIEWED

PlayStation 2 games are in blue; PS one games are in red.

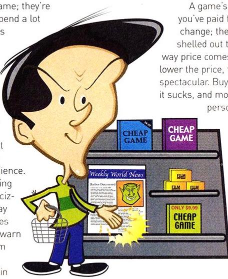
Army Men: Green Rogue 97
Army Men: Sarge's Heroes 2 97
ESPN National Hockey Night 97
MDK2 97
Rumble Racing 98
Star Wars: Episode I—Super Bombad Racing 98
Tokyo Xtreme Racer Zero 98
Triple Play Baseball 99
Aladdin in Nasira's Revenge ...100
Army Men World War: Final Front 100
Big Ol' Bass 2 101
Billiards 101
Board Game: Top Shop 101
Boxing 101
Burstrick Wake Boarding!! 102
Dragon Tales: Dragon Seek 102
Mary-Kate and Ashley: Winner's Circle 102
Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX 103
MTV Sports: T.J. Lavin's Ultimate BMX 102
Sabrina, the Teenage Witch: A Twitch in Time! 103
Simpsons Wrestling 101
Smurf Racer! 103
Time Crisis: Project Titan 104
Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six: Rogue Spear 104

THE FINAL SCORE

●●●●●

We rate games on a five-point scale. So, .5 is terrible, 2.5 is mediocre and 5 is superb. Get it?

Cheap Tricks



I got a phone call recently. It was from a PR person representing one of the companies that's begun publishing games at the new, ultra-low-budget price point of $9.99, who was unhappy with the scores we'd given the company's budget titles. The gist of the complaint was that a.) we gave the games lower scores than expected, considering the price, and b.) the games were not intended for our audience.

Let's examine the second complaint first. I understand the concept of the budget game; they're aimed at those who don't like to spend a lot of money on games, whether that's because they're not into them as much as the average game buyer or whether they're working with a limited income. And though *OPM* certainly reaches a surprisingly varied audience, the suggestion that certain kinds of games would not appeal to the average reader is not without some merit. So, fine, your games aren't intended for our audience.

The problem is, without us talking about them in the magazine—criticizing them; *reviewing* them—you may have no idea for whom these games *are* intended. And we still need to warn you, our faithful readers, away from these purchases. That's why we review games, after all: to aid you in your buying decisions. These budget titles are designed to be impulse purchases; the idea is that big department stores can put a stack of $10 games at the checkout counter for customers to look over while they're waiting in line. It's the same reason you'll find film, batteries, *TV Guide* and *The Weekly World News* at the checkout—to get people to stock up on things they might not actually need on their way out the door. And whether these games are aimed at Mr. or Ms. Average *OPM* Reader or not, chances are you spend as much time in the checkout line of the local Wal-Mart as anyone (though we suspect you may read *The Weekly World News* a bit less). So we need to let you know which of the games you'll see there are worthy of a last-minute buy. That's our job.

Now, on to the score vs. price idea. As Reviews Editor, I had to do some thinking about this one when it was announced that Sony was altering their pricing structure to allow games to go as low as $9.99. We all talked about the idea, and what we came up with is, I think, the only sensible way to factor a game's price into its score: We don't.

A game's quality doesn't change based on how much you've paid for it. Your enjoyment of the game doesn't change; the experience isn't any sweeter for only having shelled out the equivalent of a couple Happy Meals. The only way price comes into play is with regard to expectations: The lower the price, the lower our hopes that the game is going to be spectacular. Buy a $10 game and you may be less disappointed if it sucks, and more surprised if it's really exceptional, but that's a personal experience, one that changes with every consumer depending on lifestyle, knowledge of the market, depth of gaming experience, and so on. For us to claim to be able to quantify that into a review score would be ludicrous.

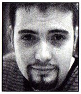
Consider, too, the fact that the price of a game continues to change over its shelf life. Is Final Fantasy VII any better a game now that it's a Greatest Hit priced at $20? Obviously not; the game hasn't changed one whit. And if we did factor price into the game's score, we'd need to go back and adjust all our old scores every month—can you imagine?

So we choose to leave it up to you. It's your choice how important a role the price will play in your buying decision. We may mention the price in the text of the review (in fact, we usually do), and maybe point out that even some below-average games offer enough interesting features to justify dropping a 10-spot. But the score will reflect the fundamental, unalterable quality of the game itself—that which does not change along with the price—and what you do with that knowledge is entirely up to you, as it is with any of our advice.

Comments? Let us know at **opm@ziffdavis.com**.

Joe Rybicki
Reviews Editor

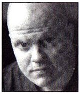
MEET THE CRITICS



JOHN DAVISON

Having spent the last six months "caretaking" sister magazine *Electronic Gaming Monthly* "on the side," John is pleased to now only be running the one magazine again.

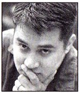
FAVORITE GENRES: Racing, Action, Adventure
CURRENT FAVORITES: Dark Cloud, Rumble Racing
CAN'T WAIT FOR: MGS2, Ico, GT3, Final Fantasy X



JOE RYBICKI

Defender of the Crown has left Joe feeling nostalgic this month, causing him to reminisce about his PC gaming days of old and the likelihood of being eaten by a Grue.

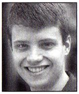
FAVORITE GENRES: Adventure, Puzzle, RPG
CURRENT FAVORITES: Rumble Racing, Burning Airlines
CAN'T WAIT FOR: Dark Cloud, MGS2, Defender of the Crown, Ico



GARY STEINMAN

After growing a healthy goatee, Gary has developed the disturbing habit of continually stroking his face, tugging on his lush, lovely beard. And you thought he was creepy before...

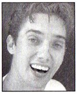
FAVORITE GENRES: RPG, Adventure, Action
CURRENT FAVORITES: Dark Cloud, Top Shop
CAN'T WAIT FOR: Final Fantasy Chronicles, FFX, more Dark Cloud



CHRIS BAKER

Looking to replace the missing staff copy of Resident Evil 2, C-Bake tried to purchase it...and was promptly carded for buying an M-rated game. Does he really look 16?! C'mon! That was a third of his life ago!

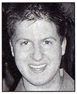
FAVORITE GENRES: Action, RPG, Adventure, Sports
CURRENT FAVORITES: Top Shop
CAN'T WAIT FOR: Spider-Man 2, NCAA Football 2002, Saiyuki



TODD ZUNIGA

Strange things are happening. First, Todd debuted on McSweeneys.net. Fine, fine. But now it appears that he like-likes a girl. Sounds crazy, but unplanned treks to Iowa City can rearrange everything.

FAVORITE GENRES: Sports, Extreme Sports, Literary Humor
CURRENT FAVORITES: Top Shop, Mat Hoffman's BMX, High Heat
CAN'T WAIT FOR: NBA Street

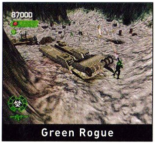


SAM KENNEDY

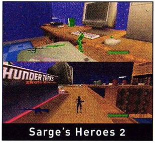
Once again, Sam spent way more money than he should have while he was in Japan. However, that didn't stop him from plunking down the cash for a new car. Watch out San Francisco, here he comes!

FAVORITE GENRES: Action, RPG
CURRENT FAVORITES: Twisted Metal Black, Devil May Cry
CAN'T WAIT FOR: Ico, FFX, FF Chronicles, Castlevania, MGS2

Green Rogue



Green Rogue



Sarge's Heroes 2

Sarge's Heroes 2

ESPN
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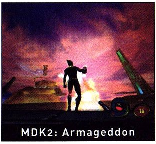
1:26 PWR PLAY
RD Marchment
C Turgeon

ESPN NHL Hockey Night

MDK2: Armageddon



MDK2: Armageddon

Army Men: Green Rogue

Publisher 3DO
Developer 3DO
Web Site www.3do.com

Though 3DO is taking somewhat of a departure from the Army Men norm with this scrolling shooter, there wasn't enough to hold my attention for very long, much less make me want to come back and play it again.

Picture a game like **Ikari Warriors or Heavy Barrel in 3D** and you've got a pretty fair idea of what Green Rogue is like. You dodge back and forth as the landscape slides inexorably toward you, controlling position with the left analog stick and aiming with the right. I like the control scheme. Heck, I even like the character (a faceless killing machine made from the "essence" of Sarge and all his heroes, all mixed together). So why don't I like this game?

Well, for starters, **the pace of the game is slow enough to serve as a cure for insomnia**. Part of this is due to the inexplicably sluggish speed at which bullets seem to move in the Army Men world (it's that way in all the games for some reason). This delay between trigger and target made me avoid all the supposedly more powerful weapons, since the slower firing rate made it all but impossible to hit the target. That's just silly. Add bland, underpopulated environments and weirdly inaccurate collision detection and you've got a game that proves boring for shooter veterans and frustrating for newcomers. No thanks.

Final Score ●●

Joe Rybicki

TEEN
Players: 1-2
Memory Card: 101 KB

Army Men: Sarge's Heroes 2

Publisher 3DO
Developer 3DO
Web Site www.3do.com

I'm starting to feel like a broken record here. But until someone on the Army Men team wises up to the state of the franchise, I'm going to keep hitting this same groove.

One thing can put this series on the right track: QA. QA stands for Quality Assurance, and in the case of game developers it usually means a team of game testers. These are the guys who are responsible for making sure that a game is actually playable. The developers of Army Men, particularly the World War and Sarge's Heroes series, need to take the time they currently spend on QA and double it. At least. Because in spite of some great new additions to this PS2 version of Sarge's Heroes, the game is fundamentally frustrating. And I don't mean "aw, crap" frustrating; I'm talking about **throw-your-damn-controller-clean-through-a-slab-of-drywall frustrating**.

The graphics are so pretty in this version, and the levels look so intriguing (most especially the oversized "real world" areas), that **stupid, cheap artificial-difficulty tricks**—like causing enemies to materialize out of thin air right behind you—and overlooked glitches—like the fact that your "lock-on" target often just doesn't feel like locking on (or will inexplicably disappear)—are almost criminal. It's a damned shame; I was really looking forward to this one.

Final Score ●●◖

Joe Rybicki

TEEN
Players: 1-2
Memory Card: 74 KB

ESPN NHL Hockey Night

Publisher Konami
Developer Konami of Europe
Web Site www.konami.com

A part of me wants to write this entire review and never mention the game itself. Maybe I could wander into near-hockey topics along the way by speaking about ice or about Toronto or even mentioning ESPN in passing.

But otherwise, the weather would make for a nice series of sentences or maybe origami. I only take this stance because it seems that the makers of Hockey Night haven't concerned themselves with the NHL, since **the game's rosters were finalized at the beginning of the season—eight months ago!** If you're going to make a game out-of-season, if you're going to make us *wait*, at least have the common courtesy to update the rosters. I don't know if other hockey fans find this important, but I certainly do. Oh, and rumor has it that Mario Lemieux came back. Yes, that's right, arguably the second best player in hockey history makes a historical comeback and it isn't even a blip on Konami's radar. And that was in December. *December!*

Of course, I'm going to talk about the game because it's my job. The way it's Konami's job to pay attention to rosters (something the recently released FaceOff wisely did). I'll also talk specifically about the game because I don't want anyone making the mistake of buying this travesty over the other PS2 hockey possibilities by EA and 989.

The finest point of the game is the ESPNness of it. The front end is clean and sharp, the announcing, done by the insightful Gary Thorne and well-versed Steve Levy, would be excellent if the developers could get their voices to keep up with the game.

While half-heartedly playing an uninspired tilt with the Lemieux-less Penguins, I marveled at the way players could skate so slowly and stiffly. While backing into my zone, my defensive players' bodies were completely quiet. The controls are unresponsive, as well, which is like some kind of beautifully painful trifecta. **Bad control, bad gameplay, bad rosters.** Trying to get off a quick shot? Forget it. Want to make a stellar pass? You'll have to be patient. Why buy this game? Unless you collect all things ESPN—and that's just weird, even from my sportscentric perspective—there's not one reason.

Final Score ●◖

Todd Zuniga

TEEN
Players: 1-4
Memory Card: 410 KB

MDK2 Armageddon

Publisher Interplay
Developer Digital Mayhem
Web Site www.interplay.com

According to the back of the MDK2 packaging, a competing magazine deems this game worthy of a score of 98 percent and the comment "a must-buy." It's certainly a pleasurable experience, but there's a lot more than 2 percent wrong with it in my opinion.

Based on the sequel to the "kinda popular but not really" original that scored respectably well on the Dreamcast last year, the PS2 version is not quite what you'd expect. **As a port of a game from another system, it's disappointing.** Graphically it is arguably somewhat inferior to its Sega-powered brethren, which begs the obvious question "what the f%@#?" It's not particularly smooth and it suffers from some occasional glitches that make you wonder if the PS2 is actually struggling to keep everything going.

Aesthetics aside though, fundamentally the MDK series inspires a genuine love-or-hate thing with most gamers. Its quirky mix of dark imagery and almost slapstick humor polarizes opinions to the point that you'll either consider it a novel diversion from the usual po-faced fare, or a feeble attempt at humor that isn't funny; just stupid. Personally I like the whole vibe, and while **my ass didn't actually fall off with laughter, I did occasionally chuckle.**

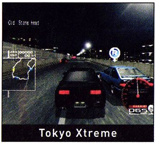
The sequel picks up where the last game left off, but this time the gameplay offers much more variety. You don't just stealthily control the rubber-suited, phallically behelmed Kurt Hectic here, you also get to blast through levels as Max the six-legged dog (put a gun in each paw and let rip) and solve object-based or spatial reasoning puzzles with Dr. Fluke Hawkins. The switching of characters keeps the pace of the game moving along nicely, and each protagonist faces foes in his own unique way. The boss fights come frequently and in increasing degrees of spectacle, with some big-ass bad guys to shoot at fairly regularly. I have to say, though, that sometimes, even with the difficulty on just a medium setting, **things get just a little out of hand**. Still, it keeps things interesting, and that's ultimately the best description of the game: "interesting." It's not going to win any awards, but it is a bit different.

Final Score ●●●◖

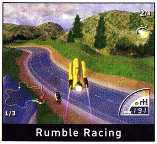
John Davison

TEEN
Players: 1
Memory Card: 70 KB

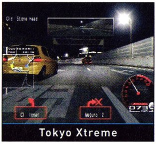
Rumble Racing



Tokyo Xtreme



Rumble Racing



Tokyo Xtreme

Rumble Racing

Publisher EA Games
Developer EA Games
Web Site www.ea.com

I'll admit it. When I first loaded up Rumble Racing I wasn't terribly impressed. The levels looked a bit simplistic, the car models had an oversimplified, plasticky sheen, and the controls seemed a bit undersensitive. Then I started advancing through the championship mode, finding shortcuts, opening new tracks...and I'm hooked. I can't stop playing this game. I've beaten it, found every secret car, and I still can't stop. That says something about a game.

The real star here is the track design. **You live or die by shortcuts**, which forces some fairly rewarding exploration (though more often than not you're led to the shortcuts by your opponents or the all-too-obvious glass barriers borrowed from SSX). But as the game progresses and your opponents get wise to your shortcuts, you're also forced to develop your power-up skills.

It's the trick system that makes all the difference in this sort-of sequel. Much like the hang-time meter in Crash Team Racing, pulling off tricks rewards you with a brief turbo boost. In order to stay ahead of the pack you need to serve up a continuous stream of flips and rolls.

This all adds up to an entertaining, white-knuckled romp through a series of interesting environments. Rumble Racing deserves a spot on the wish list of any arcade racing fan.

Final Score ●●●●◖

Joe Rybicki

Players: 1-2
Memory Card: 285 KB

Tokyo Xtreme Racer Zero

Publisher Crave
Developer Genki
Web Site www.cravegames.com

I swear that some people only like this particular series (it's actually the third game in the TXR series, the previous two blessing the Dreamcast) because it's a racing game with Japanese cars, exploiting a Japanese phenomenon, in Japan. The truly hardcore, as we've established before, adore all things Nipponese and no doubt what I'm about to say will incense a certain degree of rage. What the hell, this has to be said. Ready? **Tokyo Xtreme Racer Zero is boring.** There, I said it. Yes, it has 150 cars to choose from and 400 rivals to race against and zillions of parts and gizmos to mess around with, but the whole "streets of Tokyo at night" thing just doesn't push my buttons. The tracks, while apparently very realistic, feel claustrophobic, and the whole thing just doesn't come across as being as exciting as it should. You're challenging rivals at races through the streets, and it should be real edge-of-the-seat exciting stuff, but **I always ended up longing for more substance.**

Graphically it's very solid, albeit a little on the shiny side, and it has some cool details in the environments, but it's not jaw-dropping by any stretch of the imagination.

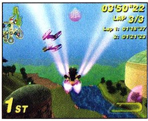
Gran Turismo 3 is out in June. Save your cash for another month; I'm sure you'll thank me.

Final Score ●●◖

John Davison

Players: 1
Memory Card: 81 kb

00'19"08
LAP 1/3
3RD



00'29"98
LAP 1/3
1ST
3RD
2ND
4TH

Star Wars: Super Bombad Racing

A wasted opportunity

Publisher Lucas Learning
Developer Lucas Learning
Web Site www.lucaslearning.com

Oh dear. Oh dear. Oh dear. First it seemed like a really lame idea when we heard about it. And then, after some time getting used to it, it had the potential to be cool. But now that it's finished and out there, I have to say that our initial reaction to the concept was right. Star Wars + karting concept = crap. It could've been fun, but it really lets itself down on so many counts.

01'44"82
LAP 2/3
Lap 1: 01'08"64
5TH

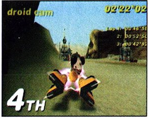
In terms of presentation it's pretty cute: super-deformed-looking Star Wars characters crammed into tiny versions of their vehicles, zooming around bright, colorful environments zapping garish weapons at each other. How can you go wrong with that? Steal some ideas from Crash Team Racing and you'd have a winner, surely? Well you'd think so, but **Bombad falls flat on its face on just about every level**.

One of the most disturbing trends in game design at the moment is when we're told that something is being designed "for kids" or "for people who aren't hardcore." In the case of Bombad it's apparently for "kids of all ages." But what does this mean? At what point did someone decide that "kids" are more forgiving of dull gameplay and graphical glitches than the rest of us? Do they not mind that **the controls are way too loose**, and that on occasion the character you're controlling will apparently tear his way through the walls of the environment? Do they not mind that the weapons don't appear to have been balanced when it comes to their impact on the game? Are they more tolerant of stuff that's just a real pain in the ass, like weapons that grind you to a halt and make you wait for a couple of seconds? No...I don't think so. And the list goes on.

After working through the game and jotting down notes on it, here are some excerpts from my notebook of doom. "Feels like you're controlling a rocket-powered feather," "Characters spout irrelevant s*** all the time and the voices sound like bad impersonations...especially Obi-Wan." Apparently I was getting pretty angry at one point as the handwriting got real scratchy when I noted "Did they remember that this was Star Wars? What's up with the weapons??!?!?" which was doubtless a reaction to the proliferation of big pink or green glowing balls that you excrete from time to time, or to the pink lightning that shoots out of your characters' eyebrows.

One of my major complaints deals with something that I *thought* may get better once you've played the game quite a bit, and that is the fact that on some of the tracks **it's almost impossible to see where it is**

03'45"08
LAP 3/3
Lap 1: 01'18"37
2: 01'21"23
1ST



01'40"79
LAP 3/3
2ND
01'40"79
LAP 2/3
5TH

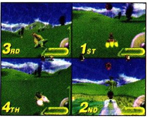
04'06"93
LAP 3/3
1ST

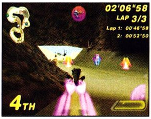
00'50"98
LAP 2/3
Lap 1: 00'46"58
4TH

that you're supposed to be going. I was wrong. Yes, it offers multiple routes through the environments, and yes there are arrows pointing you in the right direction, but in a game full of big, pink, neon, obnoxious-looking effects, the one place where it might actually be useful is the one place you don't really get it. **I don't think you should really be required to double-check the map** to make sure you're going the right way in a game like this. Maybe that's just me, but I'm of the opinion it should be more frickin' obvious. Often you'll be cruising through a tightly controlled area, and then you'll be belched out into a big open environment with multiple exits. Some of them are the right way, some of them aren't. Thanks to the double whammy of the lack of appropriate direction and the wafty, lighter than air controls, you'll find yourself going from first to last place in the blink of an eye.

While we're still on the subject of the tracks, let me briefly mention some of the environmental hazards—the "cute" little things that are out of your control and just happen when you whiz through the appropriate area. Better yet, let me provide you with a sound bite indicative of my usual response. "AAAARRRGGGH." Jawas with shrink rays (another well-known Star Wars weapon; don't you remember that bit in *Jedi* where Jimbo the Jawa zapped Chewie with the shrink ray? No?) are not "cute," they're not "clever," and they aren't anything other than really, really annoying. Maybe you can avoid them, maybe you can't...but after it hit me every lap I didn't care, I never wanted to see the track they inhabited ever, ever again.

Is it all bad? No it isn't. The music's nice. **Hearing the Imperial March played by what sounds like the Bugs Bunny orchestra is amusing as hell**, and it sits nicely with the generally slick style of the game. There are a lot of tracks too, so if you can curb your temper and play through them all, it does offer plenty to keep you occupied. There are some neat little movie-inspired touches from time to time too.



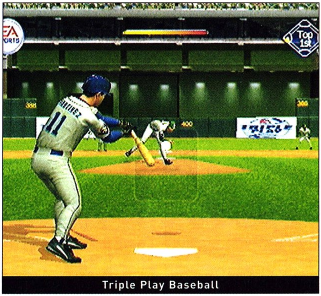


Aside from the basic races there are challenges to try, and then of course there's the multiplayer stuff for up to four infinitely tolerant people. Race in split-screen mode (which gets quite clunky), or bundle into a vaguely Demolition-esque Arena area where you're just out to zap each other.

At the end of the day, I can't help wondering that if maybe the game had been worked on for a bit longer, a lot of the problems could've been fixed. The Star Warsiness makes me want to be forgiving, but ultimately I just can't be. What a terrible, terrible shame.

Final Score ●●
John Davison

Players: 1-4
Memory Card: 106 kb



Triple Play Baseball

Triple Play Baseball

Publisher EA Sports
Developer EA Sports
Web Site www.easports.com

"Dear EA Sports,

You're kidding me, right? I mean, the package says the word Baseball right there. Right there on the cover. It's capitalized and spelled correctly. So, **where's the baseball, exactly?** I appreciate the batting practice with fielders. That's a nice touch. I'm a sucker for extras. But I don't appreciate that every time I click on Exhibition I get the same batting practice with fielders every time. What? It's not a glitch? That's the Exhibition mode? Oh, my bad. I'll quit playing now.

Sincerely,

Todd Zuniga, baseball fan"

Above is my unsent letter to EA. Why unsent? Because the deaf ears attached to the brains of the Triple Play team haven't heard the pleas to make their game remotely baseball-esque. **There have been minor improvements outside of graphics**, but if you love baseball (or if you're above the age of 10 or have respect for your gaming skills) stay far, far—galaxies far—away from this miserable game.

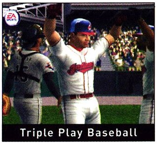
I tried and tried to play through an entire game of TPB. It took me seven tries before I finally made it nine innings. Maybe it was because my starting pitcher, Pedro Martinez—without a doubt considered the best hurler in baseball—couldn't get through three innings without giving up at least two home runs. This is the same guy who is so dominating, so efficient and lethal on the mound, more than three runs in an entire game makes teams feel like they've won the lottery. But not with Triple Play. Since it's not really baseball.

You can make the argument that it's arcade baseball. But **what's challenging in hitting home runs with every other hitter?** How is that arcadey? Pitching should be fun. Isn't it "arcadey" to strike out five guys in a row? What makes it more arcadey to have 18-13 games nearly every time? That's no arcade I want admission to.

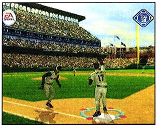
Moving on, the graphics look great as far as the stadiums, but the players are squatty and fat. No faces look right. Fielding is laughable, pitching is only fun if you throw below 70 mph (no kidding), and hitting a home run doesn't even feel good since anyone can do it. I hate this game. You will, too.

Final Score ●●
Todd Zuniga

Players: 1-2
Memory Card: 276 KB



Triple Play Baseball



Triple Play Baseball

READER REVIEWS

This month we include
the asked-for review haikus.
Send us more today!

"Onimusha"

Haven't played the game,
although it looks really sweet.
Bad-ass could work, too.

Lucas "Boots" Sutphen
jovial-spoon@excite.com

They're both great games, but
FF9 should beat CC.
Gary Steinman's right.

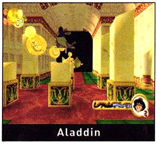
John Boreyko
jboreyko@intrex.net

Driver 2 is crap.
Slowdown, bugs, difficulty
take out all the fun.

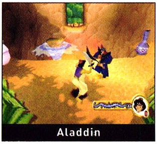
John Boreyko
jboreyko@intrex.net

***OPM* knows best.**
Never question their reviews,
or they'll kick your ass!

Paul Pflug
cybersk8er2000@juno.com



Aladdin



Aladdin

Aladdin in Nasira's Revenge

Publisher Sony CEA
Developer Argonaut
Web Site www.playstation.com

If I had a magic carpet, I doubt I'd be racing it at full speed through a crumbling castle, careening wildly, barreling into falling columns and hanging overpasses—all for no reason. With no one on my tail and no real rush, I'd slow it down, avoiding all those spine-shattering collisions.

But, alas, I don't have my own enchanted shag, so instead I'm stuck playing out this excruciating level in Aladdin. Even worse, I keep respawning after a continue point that puts me smack-dab in front of an almost unavoidable post, whacking about half of my life bar in one hit.

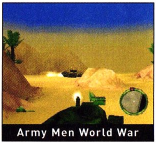
That's just one of many problems with Aladdin. Sure, it's derivative—your basic run-and-jump fare, fortified with moving platforms, swinging vines, stock enemies, awkward combat and workaday puzzles. But **the real disappointment comes from the wonky control and slipshod graphics**. Though the game is easy (it's aimed at kids), it's despairingly difficult to stomach the unnaturally slippery platforms or cheap leaps to death thanks to the jumpy camera and unresponsive control. And when you factor in the boxy graphics, unexplainable slowdown, copious pop-up, poor sight distance, and **cutscenes that actually look worse than the gameplay**, it's enough to make you want to hop onto a magic carpet and fly far, far away from this one.

Final Score ●●

Gary Steinman

Players: 1
Memory Card: 1 block

Army Men World War



Army Men World War

Army Men World War: Final Front

Publisher 3DO
Developer 3DO
Web Site www.3do.com

Good lord, is this getting old. Look, the World War games actually have a lot of potential. They could actually be really entertaining, really challenging and really unique. Instead, they're really annoying—and Final Front is no exception.

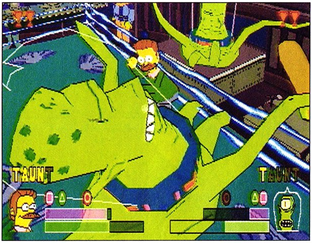
I'm not sure if the subtitle indicates that this is to be the last game in the World War series. If so, I'm actually kind of disappointed. Sure, the World War games are awful—but **they have so much potential that it's doubly frustrating to see it go unrealized**. These are easily the most realistic depictions of combat in the Army Men franchise. You're forced to make every move with utmost care, relying heavily on your ability to duck and roll, and pop out from behind cover to lay a lead sandwich on the opposition. And the generous inclusion of vehicles—plus the selection of international locales—makes for some good variety.

Unfortunately, **it still appears that no one actually plays these games before they're released**. Controls are horrendous, difficulty levels are ridiculously uneven, graphics and framerate are terrifying. On the whole, the game is (still) glitchy, buggy and unpolished. I've said it before and I'll say it again: If they would put in twice the development time—and make half the games—World War could be a hit.

Final Score ●◖

Joe Rybicki

Players: 1-2
Memory Card: 1 block



The Simpsons Wrestling

"Worst. Game. *Ever.*"

Publisher Activision
Developer Big Ape
Web Site www.activision.com

Remember that episode of *The Simpsons* when Sideshow Bob framed Krusty the Clown, only to have Bart come to Krusty's aid and set things straight? Or when Mr. Burns fenagled major leaguers to join the company softball team? Man, those were some good times.

Forgive the reminiscing, but I just had to remind myself of something—that I actually *do* like the Simpsons. Because, after playing The Simpsons Wrestling for a while, it's an easy thing to forget.

At first, things don't seem so bad. If you can get past the game's **ridiculous, plotless premise**—that the citizens of Springfield are all out to ruthlessly hurt one another in "wrestling" matches (I'm sorry, but Marge versus Lisa is just *wrong*), more accurately described as "fights"—then the cel-shaded brawlers (who really do look nice and cartoony) might impress you with their **wacky, true-to-character moves and funny sayings**. For example, Barney can burp out a cloud of hazardous beer, Professor Frink shoots at you with his Death Ray ("evil applications" and all), and the former boxer Moe can even deliver a nice flurry of punches followed by an uppercut. Each "wrestler" also speaks a respectable wealth of phrases, most notably in the form of opponent-specific taunts uttered before a match begins. ("I'm gonna use my two fists to explain the concept of 'punch drunk' to ya," says Moe prior to taking on Barney.)

But then there's the gameplay. The **horrible, horrible gameplay**. In one-player mode, after you've selected one of the eight initially playable characters (unlock as many as five more), you'll likely plow through the first few opponents with great ease by mostly just punching and kicking. But then, all of a sudden, adversaries like Smithers and Flanders come along. And they're next to impossible.

Oh, it's not all entirely a matter of them being tough themselves (though that certainly has something to do with it). Other things seem to factor in as well, such as the zooming in of the camera. When you're close up, there's absolutely no way to see the nuclear bomb headed your way from Mr. Burns, in Smithers' corner. And just try dodging Flanders' totally random Wrath of God attack!

The game improves slightly as a two-player engagement. After all, no one really has an advantage since **luckily timed button-mashing encompasses 90 percent of any sort of strategy involved**. It all makes for a game where inexperienced players stand a somewhat equal chance.

I'm really stretching here, aren't I? Just go watch some classics instead.

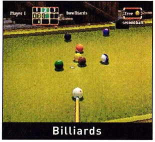
Final Score ●●

Chris Baker

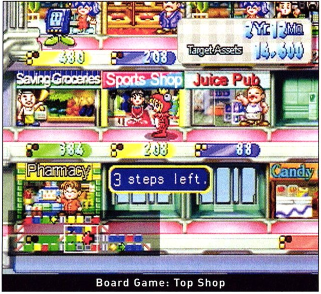
Players: 1-2
Memory Card: 1 block

trying to remove the curse. This is exactly

Big Ol' Bass 2



Billiards



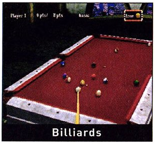
Board Game: Top Shop

RED
ROUND 2
TANAKA
THE BOXING
RUSH
RUSH

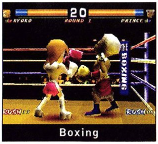
Boxing

Smallmouth bass
1'10"
7lb. 2oz.
Shallow point facing the banks. There are

Big Ol' Bass 2



Billiards



Boxing

Big Ol' Bass 2

Publisher Konami
Developer Konami
Web Site www.konami.com

Like golf, fishing games occupy a rare space: When they're good, they bust through the boundaries of their limited genres, offering up relaxing yet oddly compelling diversions. Take Hot Shots Golf, for example—or, say, the original Fisherman's Bait. Even if you've never hit the links or donned a pair of rubber waders, you can still have a grand time with these games.

Bass 2, though, doesn't hit that high-water mark. The other titles in this loose series (Fisherman's Bait, FB2: Big Ol' Bass) were based on an arcade game, and as such they had several elements that helped pep up a usually sleepy activity. Most notable was the timer: Catch more fish, add a few precious seconds to the clock. Bass 2 retains that arcadey feel—the fish are quite easy to catch—but **without the clock to work against there's not much incentive to keep casting**. And with no motivation, it quickly gets quite boring. The other big problem? Bass 2 actually looks worse than its predecessors!

Still, **the World Monster Fishing mode is a bizarre but short-lived treat**, which has you travel the world trying to net fictional fish, some weighing as much as several tons! Throw in announcers who sound like they've dropped one too many tabs of acid...no, make that hits on the crack pipe...actually, try crack and acid mixed together—and you've got a decent rental, but nothing more.

Final Score ●●◖

Gary Steinman

EVERYONE E
Players: 1-2
Memory Card: 1 block

Billiards

Publisher Agetec
Developer D3 Publisher
Web Site www.agetec.com

This is the kind of game the $10 line was created for. Simple, classic gameplay that's small on frills but big on replay value. That's not to say this is a must-buy for all pool fans, though; a few deficiencies make for some necessary caveats.

The Training mode, for example, is pretty poor. Now, I know that most people have a basic idea of how to play pool, but an in-depth training mode like the one found in Q-Ball for the PS2 is crucial to really getting into the game. Without it, the more advanced shots can prove impossible for the casual player. Detailed explanations of how to perform jump shots and "masse" shots can really improve your game, and **Billiards offers only the most basic lessons**.

Other problems include the sometimes obtrusive placement of the shot meter and the sometimes incomprehensible opponent AI (they'll occasionally pass on an easy shot to go for something more difficult, and miss).

But what's important in a pool game is the physics engine, and Billiards seems as solid in this department as any other. **Your shots generally seem to go where you'd expect**, and I didn't really notice any questionable moves the entire time I played. Basically, even though the game itself is overwhelmingly average, the price makes it more attractive to the casual player.

Final Score ●●◖

Joe Rybicki

EVERYONE E
Players: 1-2
Memory Card: 1 block

Board Game: Top Shop

Publisher Agetec/A1 Games
Developer KID
Web Site www.a1games.com

These days, it's rare that any sort of PS one game comes along to totally take the office by storm. Certainly not a $10 game. Certainly not one of Agetec's A1 line, whose previous five reviewed titles averaged a whopping score of 1.8 out of 5. Enter Top Shop.

To look at it, it's hard to see what the fuss is about. After all, it's just a bunch of anime-inspired Pokémon wannabes walking around a mall managing shops, right? Fortunately, there's much more to it than that.

Being a board game at its roots, Top Shop **plays a good bit like Monopoly** and probably wouldn't exist without such an inspirational classic. But Top Shop takes the Monopoly formula and, believe it or not, actually evolves it into a better game.

[Gummi]
But I won't run!! will defeat you and become the King of Frogs!

Board Game: Top Shop

Target Assets
Comic Boy

Board Game: Top Shop

Here's how it works: Your overall objective is to be the first player to attain a designated amount of assets. To achieve this, you must land on vacant shops in the mall (the "board") and purchase them as you would B&O Railroad or Connecticut Avenue. When a player lands on your property, he or she must purchase at least one of the three items per store, thereby increasing your assets closer to the goal and decreasing his or hers. "At least," I say? While you only have the power to purchase two items in one turn, if you manage to buy the last two in a store, you have the option—if you have enough cash—to claim the spot as your own. In other words, you can *lose* your Noodle House or Comic Boy—and the value of its assets—when someone else lands on it. It all leads to **countless strategy possibilities**. You can also increase the holding capacity of your store by claiming an adjacent location to a property you own, and you'll want to restock an inventory whenever you land on friendly territory. Fill it up with expensive items and make some *real* money!...And then promptly lose it all by drawing an Event card—Top Shop's Chance or Community Chest.

Even though playing through single-player Story mode provides enough fun on its own, **the real enjoyment comes when multiplayer action kicks in**. It's enough to easily make Top Shop the best $10 game to come along yet.

Final Score ●●●●

Chris Baker

EVERYONE E
Players: 1-6
Memory Card: 2 blocks

Boxing

Publisher Agetec
Developer A1 Games
Web Site www.agetec.com

With a seemingly never-ending flood of boxing games hitting store shelves, it's nice to find that the most simply named of them is actually a fun gaming experience. Boxing is a steady mix of Rock 'Em Sock 'Em Robots and the age-old Ring King from NES.

The characters in the game are a bit goofy, but they show off enough personality to keep you charmed. Some people might not like the idea of squaring off against a big green dragon sporting boxing gloves (who am I to judge?), but most characters don't go too far over the top. And the boxing is **a brand of old-school glovesmanship that is so simple a child could play**. Early on you'll club opponents into the ground and feel like you're putting legitimate whoop-ins to people's backsides. But later on you'll fall victim to a nasty three-punch knockout if you get cocky. So, **if you don't learn the defensive end of things in the ring, you're asking for early exits**.

The collision is well-done, the Career mode is a nice challenge, and the rounds are only 30 seconds long, making for a quick boxing fix.

Sometimes it seems like games are too complex, or too advanced, or that they're simply trying too hard. This isn't the case with Boxing, and it's a better game because of it. For the budget price of $10, you really can't go wrong.

Final Score ●●●

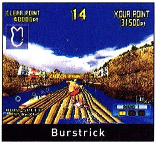
Todd Zuniga

EVERYONE E
Players: 1-2
Memory Card: 1 block

But enough about us...

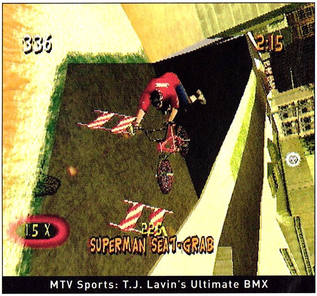
What do *you* think?

Do you think we were way off on one of our reviews this month? Do you feel like you noticed elements of the game that we missed? Well, here's your chance to sound off! Send us your own reviews of any current game at **opm@ziffdavis.com** *with the subject line "Reader Review" and you may see your own opinions in print. Remember, we're looking for reviews of the games—critiques of our own reviews will be noted but not considered for print. So there.*



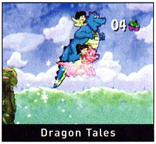
Burstrick

Dragon Tales



CLEAR POINT 10000Pt
YOUR POINT 0Pt

Burstrick



Dragon Tales

MTV Sports: T.J. Lavin's Ultimate BMX

Burstrick Wake Boarding!!

Publisher Natsume
Developer Metro
Web Site www.natsume.com

The concept of this game is cool. Do a plethora of dangerous tricks and collect Sonic the Hedgehog-type rings which both equate to points. While collecting points you're racing the clock. If you don't get enough points, you'll have to start over. Simple enough. Sounds fun. And for a couple of seconds it is. But after those couple of seconds you start to realize that your sweetest, highest-point tricks have nothing to do with your efforts. Then you'll recognize that **none of your tricks have anything to do with your abilities**. To do a trick, all you have to do is guide your wakeboarder toward a ramp. Then, you'll end up spinning off some crazy trick. The camera angle is nice, the trick looks good, but it has nothing to do with you.

As far as the way the game looks, **I feel like I'm playing a 16-bit system**. That wouldn't be all bad if the flow of the game and the gameplay were excellent, but I've had less choppy experiences being dragged face-first along an avenue of gravel.

The lack of a two-player mode is also a disappointment. Who wants to sit around wakeboarding all by themselves? I certainly don't. If I could've dragged another *OPM*er over, maybe the choppiness would've been easier to handle.

This isn't a horrible game; it's just over-flawed. You've been warned.

Final Score ●◖

Todd Zuniga

Players: 1
Memory Card: 1 block

Dragon Tales: Dragon Seek

Publisher NewKidCo
Developer Zed Two
Web Site www.newkidco.com

While preschoolers will no doubt be thrilled by Dragon Seek's frequent use of actual clips from the TV show, the inane difficulty level will no doubt bore all but the youngest of players. **The extremely repetitive gameplay had our 4-year-old critic bored in record time**, though she did plead with her pop to continue playing so she could watch the video clips. With the game priced at a full $35, picking up actual videos of the show would surely be a wiser investment.

Final Score ●◖

Bob and Kelsey Conlon

Players: 1
Memory Card: 1 block

Mary-Kate and Ashley: Winners Circle

Publisher Club Acclaim
Developer Tantalus/Dualstar
Web Site www.clubacclaim.com

Alas! The Olsen twins have finally returned to PS one—this time with a game worthy of the oh-so-coveted U.S. Equestrian Team's Top Pick 2001 award! With two gameplay modes, including a traditional three-event equestrian competition along with the more free-roaming Adventure mode, Winners Circle might have some tweenagers hot to trot. That is, if the **frustrating controls** don't make them want to watch their *It Takes Two* video instead.

Final Score ●●◖

Chris Baker

Players: 1-2
Memory Card: 1 block

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HALT
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Mary-Kate and Ashley: Winners Circle

MTV Sports: T.J. Lavin's Ultimate BMX

Publisher THQ
Developer Blue Shift
Web Site www.thq.com

I want to like Ultimate BMX. I really do. Sure, I don't know who T.J. Lavin is. We've never hung out or had a Pepsi together. Nor have I ever mastered any bike trick outside of pedaling. Yet, still, I'm searching for an X-game to soak up some hours so I can take a break from Tony Hawk 2. But Mr. Lavin's game runs into one huge problem right off the bat: I'm also reviewing Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX this month, and MHPBMX blows Lavin off the vert ramp.

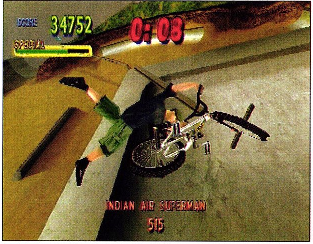
Even if Hoffman's game didn't exist, I'd still have a difficult time liking Lavin's pedal party. **The game is a decent effort, but there are flaws aplenty** that I can't overlook. My first complaint is a matter of taste. This is an MTV game, so shouldn't I like the music? I'm hip. I like good tunes, but this game doesn't pack nearly the same punch as Hoffman's superb, active soundtrack.

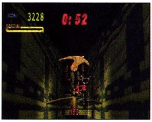
Music aside, **the control is sketchy**. If I try to lean the slightest bit to the right it seems like my leg is caught in the gears. I turn so sharply and radically something must be amiss. It's also worth noting that the graphics become problematic because of some severely sloppy pop-up. Also, the goals aren't compelling. Nothing about the game jumps out and grabs me. If you need to do some stunt biking in your free time, Hoffman's the obvious choice.

Final Score ●●

Todd Zuniga

Players: 1-2
Memory Card: 1 block





Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX

Activision's next X flatters THPS

Publisher Activision
Developer Runecraft
Web Site www.activision.com

Brace yourself for a flood of comparisons. With the release of Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX you'll hear people short-changing a fantastic game because it seems like it's just Tony Hawk's Pro Skater on a bicycle. They'll maybe go on to say that it's a great game with plenty of sweet tricks and righteous animations, but it's not gnarly enough. That **you won't get enough air to do all the things you really want to do**. Some will say that if someone's going to make a game that so closely identifies with THPS, then you should at least avoid having the exact same types of goals (two different point totals, a hidden item, vandalizing five like items in an area, etc.). They'll say if you're going to have the same types of goals you should at least shoot for the kind of depth found in THPS' award-winning sequel (10 goals per level, not five). I know critics will say these things, because I'm one of them.

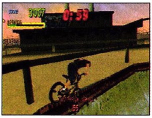
I've tried and tried to separate one from the other, but I can't suspend the fact that THPS exists.

Wise people will respond to the aforementioned complaints by saying, "Yeah, fine. THPS is right at the top of all-time great PS one games. If it ain't broken, imitate it. Even if that means on one of them fancy bicycles." And for the most part, I was in agreement. Until I played through the entire game.

Understand, before I start rolling, that I like MHPBMX. It's fun; people should run to the store and buy it. It's receiving a good score because it's a blast and **it lures me back time and again**, challenging me to master all of its crooks and angles.

Also, before I get started, understand that THPS led me to buy a skateboard and led to my looking publicly foolish. A game, a *game!*, convinced me to try skating on Chicago streets around my apartment. Skateboarding holds a fascinating romance, bicycling doesn't.

Moving onto specifics, the control—no surprise—is near-perfect. The THPS engine is lauded (and copied) for good reason. If you played Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX you know how frustrating a bike can handle. But there are no handling issues here. You'll never lose track of your biker, even while freewheeling 25 feet high. Strangely, though, **the buttons aren't as responsive as they should be**. You'll have to be deliberate to get the trick you want. In a game where timing is everything, it's irksome when a missed trick turns into a 720 Bunnyhop.



Graphically, the bikers look fantastic. They're present; their clothing (or lack thereof in Nastazio's case) shows off a lot of individuality. The tricks are dynamic and carefully animated. **The environments are vast and nicely drawn, though the pop-up is a bit frustrating at times.**

The music gets the highest marks from me. I'm guessing bikers suggested these tunes over some corporate know-nothing. Forget pop music, this game captures the raw energy of risking a Barspin at the conclusion of a 540 Superman.

This game is great. I suggest you buy it. But don't expect THPS3. It's just not in the same class.

Final Score ●●●●

Todd Zuniga

Players: 1-2
Memory Card: 1 block

Sabrina

Sabrina

Sabrina, the Teenage Witch: A Twitch in Time!

Publisher Knowledge Adventure
Developer Asylum Entertainment
Web Site knowledgeadventure.com

What follows is a log of my 19 minutes with Sabrina: A Twitch in Time!.

4:45 p.m. I boot up the game with cautious optimism, hoping for something that might satisfy the show's young female audience, at least. After all, the two shots on the back of the game look quite impressive.

4:48 p.m. After viewing a quality opening CG sequence (featuring the actual voice actor for Salem the cat, but a substitute for Sabrina...Melissa Joan Hart must have seen the crap in store), I'm thinking it might be OK.

4:49 p.m. The gameplay begins with a stage selection screen, also known as the Cosmic Cog. My only company there: an old wench who sells time-themed clothes that go along with the different eras I'll be visiting. Putting on these clothes gives me access to otherwise unreachable areas. And this is the best thing about the game. Really.

4:50 p.m. I fall off the Cog before entering the first level. I lose a life.

4:51 p.m. I enter the first level hoping for some quality third-person fighting action. That doesn't happen.

4:53 p.m. I find that I can only make about one jump in 10. The atrocious framerate starts making me dizzy.

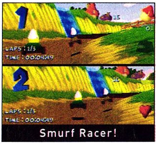
4:58 p.m. I complain about my dizziness. Skeptical Gary Steinman enters my cube to play for himself.

5:04 p.m. Gary collapses. "The spinning!" he cries. I've had enough.

Final Score ◖

Chris Baker

Players: 1
Memory Card: 1 block



Smurf Racer!

TIME: 00:07:39
LAPS:
Smurf Racer!

Smurf Racer!

Publisher Infogrames
Developer A2M
Web Site www.us.infogrames.com

You've gotta love Smurf talk. You know, the way that little blue band of cartoon non-capitalists can make the word "smurf" mean anything. So on that note, I'll sum up Smurf Racer! for you in two words: It smurfs.

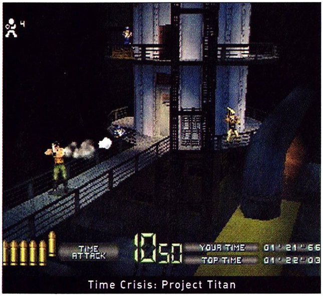
Oh, things start out smurfy enough all right, with a smurfalicious intro featuring several Smurfs outsmurfing Gargamel's cat Azrael, as they smurf past him in their personalized Smurfmobiles. (It's actually smurfier than the animation on the old Saturday-morning cartoon.) But then you hit Start, and things start to smurf. The first thing you'll notice is the actual character design of the Smurfs themselves: I know they're blue with big eyes and all, but **when the smurf did they all become indigo cyclopes?** Of course, you can only notice this when you're smurfing at them from certain angles, since most of the time during races all you'll see are their karts and their hats. And **is it really that smurfin' hard to smurf up someone who at least sounds like the original voice actors?** The gameplay itself smurfs just like any other kart racer you've ever smurfed, with the only real innovation being the necessary wind-ups you have to pass through in a timely manner so that you don't smurf down temporarily.

At best, Smurf Racer!, smurfing at $10, is a semi-decent first game for children. But otherwise, smurf it.

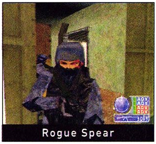
Final Score ●●

Chris Baker

Players: 1-2
Memory Card: 1 block



Time Crisis: Project Titan


Rogue Spear

Rogue Spear

Time Crisis: Project Titan

Publisher Namco
Developer Flying Tiger/Namco
Web Site www.namco.com

All right! It's about time we get another gun game for the PS one. With the whole video game violence topic still fresh in a lot of minds, many companies have refrained from releasing any more games in this once-staple genre for the industry. Kudos to Namco for keeping 'em coming, and if you're like me and need a good shooter fix every once in a while, Time Crisis: Project Titan will likely be a welcome addition to your library. That's not to say it's an exceptional game by any means—in fact, **it's merely competent in my humble opinion**. But it is a new gun shooter, and that alone warrants attention.

Project Titan follows in line with the rest of the Time Crisis series in that you're required to not only blast away enemies, but use the action button to reload and duck behind objects for cover. This gameplay element is what has always kept the Crisis series so tension-filled and exciting, and it's executed well in Project Titan. In order to play the game, you need to use Namco's special GunCon peripheral, which features added accuracy and the extra action buttons on it.

Another aspect of the Crisis series that isn't so well-represented in Project Titan, though, is the pacing. The games keep you timed, which can usually build a lot of suspense and tension, but **in Project Titan, things just seem off**. It's not bad by any means, but those of you who are already familiar with Time Crisis 1 on the PS one may end up feeling a little underwhelmed—or outright bored.

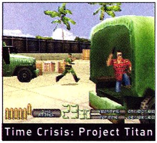
Project Titan at least looks and sounds pretty solid. Graphically, the game is about on par with the original—which could be viewed as a good thing, but also bad, considering this is coming out four years later. Unfortunately, **many of the environments and enemies just aren't as interesting as the other Crisis games**. The game's background musical score is nice, but at times I felt it was a little slow-paced.

All in all, Project Titan comes off as a worthy attempt from the U.S. side of Namco to offer a new update in the Crisis series for shooter-starved PS one owners. And you can't really fault them for that.

Final Score ●●●
Sam Kennedy

TEEN
Players: 1
Memory Card: 1 block

Time Crisis: Project Titan


Time Crisis: Project Titan

Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six: Rogue Spear

Publisher Red Storm Entertainment
Developer Saffire
Web Site www.redstorm.com

Oh here we go, another PC game that's been squeezed onto the PS one and in the process has lost a good majority of its appeal. Like so many other PC ports, it just doesn't work—everything just ends up being **ugly, choppy and confusing**.

But not to get on Red Storm's case too much; I will admit that for fans of squad-based combat games, this is one of the best out there. Not only does it serve up a good deal of action while you execute missions, but there is so much that goes into the planning and customization of these assignments. It can be quite thrilling to come up with new plans of attack and then carry them out.

The main problem I had with the game, though, was in the area of graphics. Not only was it a pain to try to figure out what was what when I toyed with my battle tactics, but **trying to play them out in the actual missions gave me a headache**. While the characters and backgrounds are nicely detailed, the damn framerate irked me greatly.

And I don't really quite understand the music in the game: The score is superb, but it's plain awkward to have one track cut to another midway through. Also, these cuts would often make popping sounds too—like when a CD skips. Ouch.

If the squad-combat stuff interests you, maybe try renting this one.

Final Score ●●◖
Sam Kennedy

TEEN
Players: 1
Memory Card: 1 block

PS2 Review Archive

Game names in green indicate a Greatest Hits title. Ratings in red indicate a five-disc scor

Game	Publisher	Score	Issue
4x4 EVO	GOD Games	●●●●	44
The Adventures of Cookie & Cream	Agetec	●●●◖	44
Aqua Aqua	3DO	●●	42
All-Star Baseball 2002	Acclaim	●●●◖	45
Armored Core 2	Agetec	●●●	39
Army Men Air Attack	3DO	●●●◖	44
ATV Offroad Fury	Sony CEA	●●●●	42
The Bouncer	Square EA	●●●	42
Dead or Alive 2: Hardcore	Tecmo	●●●●◖	39
Disney's Donald Duck: Goin' Quackers	Ubi Soft	●●●◖	42
Driving Emotion Type-S	Square EA	●●◖	41
Dynasty Warriors 2	Koei	●●●●	38
Eternal Ring	Agetec	●●	38
ESPN International Track & Field	Konami	●●●	39
ESPN MLS ExtraTime	Konami	●●	44
ESPN NBA 2Night	Konami	●●	42
ESPN Winter X Games Snowboarding	Konami	●●●	41
Evergrace	Agetec	●●	39
F1 Championship	Ubi Soft	●●●●	43
F1 Championship Season 2000	EA Sports	●●◖	41
Fantavision	Sony CEA	●●●●	40
FIFA 2001 Major League Soccer	EA Sports	●●●●◖	39
Gradius III and IV	Konami	●●◖	39
Gungriffon Blaze	Working Designs	●●●◖	39
High Heat MLB 2002	3DO	●●●●	44
Kengo: Master of Bushido	Crave	●●●	42
Kessen	EA Games	●●●	39
Knockout Kings 2001	EA Sports	●●●●	42
Madden NFL 2001	EA Sports	●●●●◖	38
Midnight Club	Rockstar	●●●●	39
Moto GP	Namco	●●●●	39
NASCAR 2001	EA Sports	●●◖	40
NBA Hoopz	Midway	●●●	44
NBA Live 2001	EA Sports	●●●	42
NBA ShootOut 2001	Sony CEA	●●◖	44
NCAA Final Four 2001	Sony CEA	●	41
NCAA GameBreaker 2001	Sony CEA	●◖	41
NFL GameDay 2001	Sony CEA	●	40
NHL FaceOff 2001	989 Sports	●●●◖	43
NHL 2001	EA Sports	●●●●	38
Oni	Rockstar	●◖	43
Onimusha: Warlords	Capcom	●●●●	43
Orphen: Scion of Sorcery	Activision	●●●	39
Q-Ball Billiards Master	Take 2	●●●◖	40
Quake III Revolution	EA Games	●●●●◖	44
Rayman 2 Revolution	Ubi Soft	●●●●●	41
RC Revenge Pro	Acclaim	●●◖	41
Ready 2 Rumble Boxing Round 2	Midway	●●●●	40
Real Pool	Infogrames	●●●◖	40
Ridge Racer V	Namco	●●●●◖	38
Ring of Red	Konami	●●●●	43
Shadow of Destiny	Konami	●●●◖	43
Silent Scope	Konami	●●●	39
Silpheed: The Lost Planet	Working Designs	●●◖	40
Sky Odyssey	Activision	●●●	40
Smuggler's Run	Rockstar	●●●●◖	39
SSX	EA Sports BIG	●●●●●	38
Star Wars: Starfighter	LucasArts	●●●●◖	43
Street Fighter EX 3	Capcom	●●●◖	39
Summoner	THQ	●●●	39
Super Bust-A-Move	Acclaim	●●●	41
Surfing H3O	Rockstar	●●	40
Swing Away Golf	EA Games	●●●	38
Tekken Tag Tournament	Namco	●●●●◖	39
Theme Park Roller Coaster	Bullfrog	●●●●	41
Tiger Woods PGA Tour	EA Sports	●●●	44
TimeSplitters	Eidos Int.	●●●●●	39
Top Gear Dare Devil	Kemco	●●●◖	41
Unison	Tecmo	●●●◖	44
Unreal Tournament	Infogrames	●●◖	40
Warriors of Might & Magic	3DO	●●◖	44
Wild Wild Racing	Interplay	●●●	39
Winback	Koei	●●●●	43
World Destruction League: Thunder Tanks	3DO	●●●	42
X Squad	EA Games	●●●◖	38
Z.O.E: Zone of the Enders	Konami	●●●●◖	44

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007 Racing	EA Games	●●●	41
3Xtreme	989 Studios	●	21
40 Winks	GT Interactive	●●●●	28
102 Dalmatians: Puppies to the Rescue	Eidos	●●●◖	41
A Bug's Life	Sony CEA	●●	15

Game	Publisher	Score	Issue
Ace Combat 2	Namco	●●●●●	1
Ace Combat 3: Electrosphere	Namco	●●●	31
Action Bass	Take Two.	●●	37
Action Man: Operation Extreme	Hasbro	●●●	41
Akuji the Heartless	Crystal Dynamics	●●●	18
Alexi Lalas International Soccer	Rockstar	●	23
Alien Resurrection	Fox Interactive	●●●	38
Alundra	Working Designs	●●●●◖	4
Alundra 2	Activision	●●●	32
Animaniacs Ten Pin Alley	ASC	●●●	17
Animorphs: Shattered Reality	Infogrames	●●◖	37
Ape Escape	Sony CEA	●●●●●	22
Apocalypse	Activision	●●●	16
Arcade Party Pak	Midway	●●●◖	28
Arcade's Greatest Hits: Atari Collection 2	Midway	●●◖	7
Arcade's Greatest Hits: Midway Collection 2	Midway	●●	4
Armored Core	Sony CEA	●●●◖	3
Armored Core: Master of Arena	Agetec	●●	31
Armorines: Project S.W.A.R.M.	Acclaim	◖	35
Army Men 3D	3DO	●●●	20
Army Men Air Attack 2	3DO	●●●◖	39
Army Men: Sarge's Heroes	3DO	●●	32
Army Men: Sarge's Heroes 2	3DO	●●◖	40
Army Men: World War	3DO	●◖	34
Army Men World War: Land, Sea, Air	3DO	●◖	39
Arthur! Ready to Race	The Learning Co.	●●●●	42
Assault	Midway	●●●	15
Asteroids	Activision	●●●◖	16
ATV: Quad Power Racing	Acclaim	●	39
Auto Destruct	Electronic Arts	●●●	6
Azure Dreams	Konami	●●●	10
Backstreet Billiards	Ascii	●●●◖	15
Ball Breakers	Take 2	●●●◖	36
Ballistic	Infogrames	●●●●	27
Baseball 2000	Interplay	●●	21
Bass Landing	Agetec	●●●◖	26
Bass Rise	Bandai	●●●	28
Batman & Robin	Acclaim	●	13
Batman Beyond: Return of the Joker	Ubi Soft	◖	39
Battletanx: Global Assault	3DO	●◖	31
Beast Wars	Hasbro Int.	●◖	5
Big Air	Accolade	●◖	20
Bio F.R.E.A.K.S.	Midway	●●	10
Black Bass with Blue Marlin	Hot-B	●●	29
Blade	Activision	●●◖	41
Blast Radius	Psygnosis	●●●◖	19
Blaster Master: Blasting Again	Sunsoft	●●●	38
Blasto	Sony CEA	●●●◖	8
Bloody Roar	Sony CEA	●●●◖	6
Bloody Roar 2	Sony CEA	●●●●	21
Bomberman Fantasy Race	Atlus	●●◖	19
Bomberman Party Edition	Vatical	●●◖	38
Bomberman World	Atlus	●●◖	13
Boombots	SouthPeak	●●◖	27
Bottom of the 9th '97	Konami	●●●◖	1
Bowling	Agetec	●●	43
Brave Fencer Musashi	Square EA	●●●●	15
Bravo Air Race	THQ	●●●	1
Breakout	Hasbro Int.	◖	39
Breath of Fire III	Capcom	●●●◖	9
Breath of Fire IV	Capcom	●●●◖	40
Brigandine	Atlus	●●●◖	15
Broken Sword	THQ	●●●●	5
Broken Sword II	Crave	●●●◖	27
Brunswick Circuit Pro Bowling	THQ	●●●◖	13
Brunswick Circuit Pro Bowling 2	THQ	●●●●	31
Bug Riders	GT Interactive	●●	3
Bugs Bunny Lost In Time	Infogrames	●●●◖	23
Bugs Bunny & Taz: Time Busters	Infogrames	●●●	41
Builder's Block	Jaleco	●●●◖	35
Bushido Blade 2	Square EA	●●●◖	14
Bust A Groove	989 Studios	●●●●	16
Bust A Groove 2	Enix	●●●	36
Bust-A-Move 99	Acclaim	●●	19
Bust-A-Move 4	Natsume	●●●●	17
Buzz Lightyear of Star Command	Activision	●●◖	39
C: The Contra Adventure	Konami	●◖	12
Caesar's Palace II	Interplay	●●	15
Caesar's Palace 2000	Interplay	◖	41
Cardinal SYN	Sony CEA	●●●	9
CART World Series	Sony CEA	●●●◖	3
Casper: Friends Around the World	Sound Source	●◖	41
Castlevania: SotN	Konami	●●●●●	2
Castrol Honda Superbike	Electronic Arts	●●	21
Centipede	Hasbro Int.	●	22
Championship Bass	EA Sports	●●●●	33
Championship Motocross Featuring Ricky Carmichael	THQ	●●●◖	25
Championship Motocross 2001 Featuring Ricky Carmichael	THQ	●●●	41
Championship Surfer	Mattel Int.	●●●	41
Chessmaster II	Mindscape	●●●◖	23
Chicken Run	Eidos	●●●	41
Chocobo Racing	Square EA	●●●	23
Chocobo's Dungeon 2	Square EA	●●◖	29
Chrono Cross	Square EA	●●●●●	36
Circuit Breakers	Mindscape	●●●	12
Civilization II	Activision	●●●●◖	18
Clock Tower	Ascii	●●●	2
Clock Tower II: The Struggle Within	Agetec	●●◖	28
Colin McRae Rally	Sony CEA	●●●●	30
Colin McRae Rally 2	Codemasters	●●●●●	40
Colony Wars	Psygnosis	●●●●●	4
Colony Wars: Red Sun	Psygnosis	●●●●◖	31
Colony Wars: Vengeance	Psygnosis	●●●◖	14
Command & Conquer: Red Alert	Virgin	●●●◖	4
Contender	Sony CEA	●●●●	17
Contender 2	Bam!	●	41
Cool Boarders 2	Sony CEA	●●●●	3
Cool Boarders 3	989 Studios	●●●	14
Cool Boarders 4	989 Studios	●●●	27
Cool Boarders 2001	Sony CEA	●	39
Countdown Vampires	Bandai	●◖	32
Covert Ops: Nuclear Dawn	Activision	●●◖	34
Crash Bandicoot 2	Sony CEA	●●●●	3
Crash Bandicoot: WARPED	Sony CEA	●●●●●	15
Crash Bash	SCEA/Universal	●●◖	39
Crime Killer	Interplay	●●●	12
Critical Depth	GT Interactive	●●●	3
Croc	Fox Interactive	●●●●	1
Croc 2	Fox Interactive	●●◖	22
Crusaders of Might & Magic	3DO	●●●	30
CTR: Crash Team Racing	Sony CEA	●●●●●	26
CyberTiger	EA Sports	●●●●	27
Dance Dance Revolution	Konami	●●●●	42
Danger Girl	THQ	●●◖	39
Dark Omen	Electronic Arts	●●	9
DarkStalkers	Capcom	●●●●	16
Darkstone	Take 2 Int.	●●●◖	43
Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX	Acclaim Max	●●●◖	38
Dead in the Water	ASC	●●◖	17
Dead or Alive	Tecmo	●●●●◖	8
Deathtrap Dungeon	Eidos	●●◖	9
Deception III: Dark Delusion	Tecmo	●●●●	31
Demolition Racer	Infogrames	●●●●	26
Destrega	Koei	●●●●	16
Destruction Derby Raw	Midway	●●●●	39
Devil Dice	THQ	●●●◖	13
Diablo	Electronic Arts	●●●●	8
Die Hard Trilogy: Viva Las Vegas	Fox Interactive	●●	31
Digimon World	Bandai	●◖	36
Dino Crisis	Capcom	●●●●	25
Dino Crisis 2	Capcom	●●●●◖	38
Disney's Dinosaur	Ubi Soft	●◖	36
Donald Duck: Goin' Quackers	Ubi Soft	●●●	39
Downhill Mountain Bike Racing	Activision	●●◖	27
Dragon Valor	Namco	●●●	38
DragonBall GT	Bandai	●●	4
Dragonseeds	Jaleco	●●	15
Driver	GT Interactive	●●●●	24
Driver 2	Infogrames	●●●●	40
Ducati World Championship Racing	Acclaim	●●◖	41
Duke Nukem: Land of the Babes	Infogrames	●●◖	40
Duke Nukem: Time to Kill	GT Interactive	●●●◖	14
Duke Nukem: Total Meltdown	GT Interactive	●●●	5
Dukes of Hazzard	SouthPeak	●◖	29
Dukes of Hazzard II: Daisy Dukes it Out	SouthPeak	●●	41
Dune 2000	Electronic Arts	●◖	27
EA Sports Supercross	EA Sports	●●●◖	41
Eagle One: Harrier Attack	Infogrames	●●●	32
Echo Night	Agetec	●●●	23
ECW Anarchy Rulz	Acclaim	●	38
ECW Hardcore Revolution	Acclaim	●◖	30
Ehrgeiz	Square EA	●●●◖	21
Einhänder	Sony CEA	●●●●	8
Elemental Gearbolt	Working Designs	●●●●	11
Eliminator	Psygnosis	●◖	20
The Emperor's New Groove	SCEA	●●●◖	40
ESPN MLS Game Night	Konami	●●●	40
Eternal Eyes	Sunsoft	●◖	38
Evil Dead: Hail to the King	THQ	●●◖	41
Evil Zone	Titus	●●●	25
Expendable	Infogrames	●◖	34
F1 2000	EA Sports	●●●◖	33
F1 Championship Season	EA Sports	●●●◖	40
F1 Racing Championship	Ubi Soft	●●◖	39
Family Feud	Hasbro Int.	●●●	39
Family Game Pack	3DO	●●◖	33
Fantastic Four	Acclaim	●●	3
Fatal Fury: Wild Ambition	SNK	●◖	30
Fear Effect	Eidos	●●●●◖	31
Fear Effect 2: Retro Helix	Eidos	●●●●◖	43
Felony 11-79	Ascii	●●●	1
FIFA 98	EA Sports	●●●◖	4
FIFA 99	EA Sports	●●●●◖	17
FIFA 2000	EA Sports	●●●●◖	27
FIFA 2001 Major League Soccer	EA Sports	●●●●◖	39
The Fifth Element	Activision	◖	15
Fighter Maker	Agetec	●●●◖	21
Fighting Force	Eidos	●●●	3
Fighting Force 2	Eidos	●●	29
Final Fantasy Anthology	Square EA	●●●●◖	26
Final Fantasy Tactics	Sony CEA	●●●●	5
Final Fantasy VII	Sony CEA	●●●●●	1
Final Fantasy VIII	Square EA	●●●●●	25
Final Fantasy IX	Square EA	●●●●●	39
Fisherman's Bait	Konami	●●●◖	18
Fisherman's Bait 2: Big Ol' Bass	Konami	●●●	27
Flintstones Bedrock Bowling	SouthPeak	●	37
Ford Racing	Empire	●●◖	44
Formula 1 '98	Psygnosis	●●●●	15
Formula 1 '99	Psygnosis	●●●◖	28
Forsaken	Acclaim	●●●●	10
Fox Sports Golf '99	Fox Interactive	●●	11
Fox Sports Soccer '99	Fox Interactive	●●◖	11
Freestyle Boardin' '99	Capcom	●●◖	18
Freestyle Motocross: McGrath vs. Pastrana	Acclaim	●●◖	40
Frogger	Hasbro Int.	●●◖	4
Frogger 2: Swampy's Revenge	Hasbro Int.	●●●	38
Front Mission 3	Square EA	●●●●◖	31
Future Cop L.A.P.D.	Electronic Arts	●●●	13
G-Police	Psygnosis	●●●●◖	3
G-Police 2	Psygnosis	●●●●	25
G.Darius	THQ	●●●●	13
Galaga: Destination Earth	Hasbro Int.	●●◖	39
Galerians	Crave	●●●	33
Gallop Racer	Tecmo	●●◖	28
Gauntlet Legends	Midway	●●◖	32
Gekido	Interplay	●●●	34
Gex: Deep Cover Gecko	Eidos	●●●◖	20
Gex: Enter the Gecko	Midway	●●●◖	7
Ghost in the Shell	THQ	●●●●	4
Glover	Hasbro Int.	●●	28
Gold and Glory: The Road to El Dorado	Revolution	●●	42
Gran Turismo	Sony CEA	●●●●●	9
Gran Turismo 2	Sony CEA	●●●●●	29
Grand Theft Auto	Take 2	●●◖	10
Grand Theft Auto 2	Rockstar	●●●	27
Grand Theft Auto: London 1969	Rockstar	●●◖	22
Grand Tour Racing '98	Activision	●●●	1
Grandia	Sony CEA	●●●●◖	26
Granstream Saga	THQ	●●●	10
The Grinch	Konami/Universal	●◖	39
Grind Session	Sony CEA	●●●●	34
Grudge Warriors	Take 2	●●	34
Guardian's Crusade	Activision	●●●	19
Gundam Battle Assault	Bandai	●●●	40
HardBall '99	Accolade	●◖	15
Harvest Moon: Back to Nature	Natsume	●●●◖	40
HBO Boxing	Acclaim	●●	41
Heart of Darkness	Interplay	●●●●	13
Hello Kitty's Cube Frenzy	NewKidCo	●●◖	20
Herc's Adventures	LucasArts	●●●	2
High Heat Baseball 2000	3DO	●	22
High Heat Major League Baseball 2002	3DO	●●●●	43
Hogs of War	Infogrames	●●●●	38
Hot Shots Golf	Sony CEA	●●●●	7
Hot Shots Golf 2	Sony CEA	●●●◖	30
Hot Wheels Turbo Racing	Electronic Arts	●●◖	25
Hydro Thunder	Midway	●●	31
Incredible Crisis	Titus	●●●◖	38
Intelligent Qube	Sony CEA	●●●	2
Intellivision Classic Games	Activision	●◖	28
Int. Superstar Soccer '98	Konami	●●●●◖	11
Int. Track & Field 2000	Konami	●●●●	27
Invasion From Beyond	GT Interactive	●●	19
Iron Soldier 3	Vatical	●●●●	35
Irritating Stick	Jaleco	●●●	18
ISS Pro Evolution	Konami	●●●●◖	35
Jackie Chan Stuntmaster	Midway	●●●◖	30
Jade Cocoon	Crave	●●●◖	23
Jarrett & LaBonte Stock Car Racing	Codemasters	●●●●	38
Jeopardy!	Hasbro Int.	●●●●	17
Jeopardy! 2	Hasbro Int.	●●●●	29
Jeremy McGrath Supercross 2000	Acclaim	●◖	38
Jersey Devil	Sony CEA	●●	10
Jet Moto 2	Sony CEA	●●●◖	3
Jet Moto 3	989 Studios	●●●◖	26
Jimmy Johnson VR Football	Interplay	●●	2
Jojo's Bizarre Adventure	Capcom	●●●●◖	31
Juggernaut	Jaleco	●●	26
K-1 Grand Prix	Jaleco	●●●◖	28
K-1 Revenge	Jaleco	●●◖	18
Kagero: Deception II	Tecmo	●●●●◖	14
Kartia	Atlus	●●●●	12
Kensei Sacred Fist	Konami	●◖	17
Killer Loop	Crave	●●●	27
King of Fighters '99	Agetec	●●●●	41
Klonoa	Namco	●●●●●	6
Knockout Kings	EA Sports	●●●◖	16
Knockout Kings	EA Sports	●●●●	39
Knockout Kings 2000	EA Sports	●●●●	27
Konami Arcade Classics	Konami	●●◖	23
Koudelka	Infogrames	●●●	35
Kurt Warner's Arena Football Unleashed	Midway	●●●	34
The Land Before Time: Return to the Great Valley	Sound Source	●●◖	39
Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver	Eidos	●●●●◖	25
The Legend of Dragoon	Sony CEA	●●●●◖	34
Legend of Legaia	Sony CEA	●●●●	19
Legend of Mana	Square EA	●●◖	35
Lego Rock Raiders	Lego Media	●	37
The Lion King: Simba's Mighty Adventure	Paradox	●◖	42
The Little Mermaid II	THQ	●●●●	39
Lode Runner	Natsume	●●◖	4
Looney Tunes Racing	Infogrames	●●◖	39
The Lost World: Jurassic Park	Electronic Arts	●	2
Lunar: Silver Star Story Complete	Working Designs	●●●●◖	22
Lunar 2: Eternal Blue Complete	Working Designs	●●●●	40
Madden NFL 98	EA Sports	●●●●	2
Madden NFL 99	EA Sports	●●●●◖	13
Madden NFL 2000	EA Sports	●●●●●	25
Madden NFL 2001	EA Sports	●●●●●	37
Marvel SH vs. Street Fighter	Capcom	●●●◖	18
Marvel Superheroes	Capcom	●●	2
Marvel Vs. Capcom EX	Capcom	●●◖	30
Mary-Kate and Ashley: Magical Mystery Mall	Acclaim	●●●◖	40
Mass Destruction	ASC	●●◖	3
Maximum Force	Midway	●◖	2
MDK	Playmates	●●◖	3
Medal Of Honor	Electronic Arts	●●●●	27
Medal Of Honor Underground	Electronic Arts	●●●●	39
MediEvil	Sony CEA	●●●●	14
MediEvil II	Sony CEA	●●●◖	32
Mega Man Legends	Capcom	●●●●	12
Mega Man Legends 2	Capcom	●●●◖	39
Mega Man X4	Capcom	●●●	4
Mega Man X5	Capcom	●●●◖	41
Metal Gear Solid	Konami	●●●●●	14
Metal Gear Solid VR Missions	Konami	●●●●	25
Metal Slug X	Agetec	●●●●	43
Micro Machines	Midway	●●●●●	5
Micro Maniacs	Codemasters	●●●●	32
Mike Tyson Boxing	Codemasters	●●	39
The Misadventures of Tron Bonne	Capcom	●●●●	31
Miss Spider's Tea Party	Simon & Schuster	●●●	41
Mission: Impossible	Infogrames	●●	28
Missile Command	Hasbro Interactive	●●●	28
MK Mythologies	Midway	●●◖	3
MLB 98	Sony CEA	●●●	1
MLB 99	Sony CEA	●●●●	9
MLB 2000	989 Studios	●●●●	21
MLB 2001	989 Studios	●●●	33
MLBPA Bottom of the 9th '99	Konami	●●●◖	12
Mobil 1: Rally Championship	Electronic Arts	●●●	32
Monaco Grand Prix	Ubi Soft	●●●◖	21
Monkey Hero	Take 2	●●	18
Monkey Magic	Sunsoft	●	29
Monopoly	Hasbro Int.	●●●	5

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Game names in green indicate a Greatest Hits title. Ratings in red indicate a five-disc score.

Game	Publisher	Score	Issue
Monster Rancher 2	Tecmo	●●●●	26
Monster Rancher Battle Card: Episode II	Tecmo	●●●◖	36
Monster Rancher Hop-A-Bout	Tecmo	●●●◖	41
Monster Seed	Sunsoft	●●◖	20
Mort the Chicken	Crave	●◖	41
Mortal Kombat: Special Forces	Midway	●◖	36
Mortal Kombat 4	Midway	●●●◖	11
Moto Racer	Electronic Arts	●●●●●	3
Moto Racer 2	Electronic Arts	●●●●◖	14
Moto Racer World Tour	Infogrames	●●●●	40
Motorhead	Fox Interactive	●●●◖	14
Mr. Domino	Acclaim	●●●◖	15
Mr. Driller	Namco	●●●●	33
Ms. Pac-Man Maze Madness	Namco	●●●●	38
MTV Music Generator	Codemasters	●●●●	28
MTV Sports: Pure Ride	THQ	●●●◖	39
MTV Sports: Skateboarding featuring Andy MacDonald	THQ	●	39
The Mummy	Konami	●●◖	41
Muppet Monster Adventure	Midway	●●●●	39
Muppet Race Mania	Midway	●●●◖	39
N20	Fox Interactive	●●	11
Nagano Winter Olympics '98	Konami	●●	6
NASCAR 98	EA Sports	●●●●	3
NASCAR 99	Electronic Arts	●●●●	14
NASCAR 2000	EA Sports	●●●●	26
NASCAR 2001	EA Sports	●●◖	38
NASCAR Heat	Hasbro Int.	●●●◖	40
NASCAR Rumble	Electronic Arts	●●●◖	31
NBA Fastbreak '98	Midway	●●◖	4
NBA Hoopz	Midway	●●●	43
NBA In the Zone '98	Konami	●●◖	7
NBA In the Zone '99	Konami	●●●◖	19
NBA In the Zone 2000	Konami	●●◖	28
NBA Live 98	EA Sports	●●●●◖	3
NBA Live 99	EA Sports	●●●●	16
NBA Live 2000	EA Sports	●●●●◖	28
NBA Live 2001	EA Sports	●●●●	39
NBA ShootOut 98	Sony CEA	●●●◖	8
NBA ShootOut 2000	989 Studios	●●●	30
NBA ShootOut 2001	989 Studios	●●◖	39
NBA Showtime NBA on NBC	Midway	●●●	28
NBA Tonight	ESPN Digita	●●●	14
NCAA Final Four '99	989 Studios	●●●◖	18
NCAA Final Four 2000	989 Studios	●●●◖	28
NCAA Final Four 2001	Sony CEA	●●	40
NCAA Football 98	EA Sports	●●	2
NCAA Football 99	EA Sports	●●●●◖	12
NCAA Football 2000	EA Sports	●●●●	25
NCAA Football 2001	EA Sports	●●●◖	36
NCAA GameBreaker 98	Sony CEA	●●●●	4
NCAA GameBreaker 99	989 Studios	●●●●	15
NCAA GameBreaker 2000	989 Studios	●●●	25
NCAA GameBreaker 2001	Sony CEA	●●◖	37
NCAA March Madness 98	EA Sports	●●●●	7
NCAA March Madness 99	EA Sports	●●●	18
NCAA March Madness 2000	EA Sports	●●●●	29
NCAA March Madness 2001	EA Sports	●●	41
Nectaris: Military Madness	Jaleco	●●●●	17
Need for Speed III	Electronic Arts	●●●●	8
Need for Speed: High Stakes	Electronic Arts	●●●●◖	20
Need for Speed: Porsche Unleashed	Electronic Arts	●●●◖	33
Need for Speed: V-Rally	Electronic Arts	●◖	3
Need for Speed: V-Rally 2	Electronic Arts	●●●◖	28
Newman/Haas Racing	Psygnosis	●●	7
The Next Tetris	Hasbro Int.	●●●	24
NFL Blitz	Midway	●●●●●	13
NFL Blitz 2000	Midway	●●●●●	24
NFL Blitz 2001	Midway	●●●◖	38
NFL GameDay 98	Sony CEA	●●●●●	1
NFL GameDay 99	989 Studios	●●●●	13
NFL GameDay 2000	EA Sports	●●●●	25
NFL GameDay 2001	989 Sports	●●◖	37
NFL Xtreme	989 Studios	●●	11
NFL Xtreme 2	989 Studios	●◖	24
N.GEN Racing	Infogrames	●●◖	35
NHL 99	EA Sports	●●●●◖	15
NHL 2000	EA Sports	●●●●	26
NHL 2001	EA Sports	●●●●	38
NHL Blades of Steel 2000	Konami	●●	28
NHL Breakaway 98	Acclaim	●●●	2
NHL Championship 2000	Fox Interactive	●●●	27
NHL FaceOff 98	Sony CEA	●●●●●	2
NHL FaceOff 99	989 Studios	●●●●	14
NHL FaceOff 2000	989 Studios	●●●●	26
NHL FaceOff 2001	Sony CEA	●●●●◖	38
NHL Rock the Rink	Electronic Arts	●●●●	32
Nightmare Creatures	Activision	●●●◖	3
Nightmare Creatures II	Konami	●●	33
Ninja: Shadow of Darkness	Eidos	●◖	15
Nuclear Strike	Electronic Arts	●●●●◖	3
O.D.T.	Psygnosis	●◖	15
Oddworld: Abe's Exoddus	GT Interactive	●●●●◖	15
Oddworld: Abe's Oddysee	GT Interactive	●●●●	1
One	ASC	●●●●	4
Pac-Man World	Namco	●●●●◖	25
Pandemonium! 2	Midway	●●●◖	3
PaRappa the Rapper	Sony CEA	●●●●●	2
Parasite Eve	Square EA	●●●●	12
Parasite Eve II	Square EA	●●●●◖	37
Persona 2: Eternal Punishment	Atlus	●●●●	41
Peter Jacobsen's Golden Tee Golf	Infogrames	●●●◖	41
PGA Tour 98	EA Sports	●●●	3
Pitfall 3D	Activision	●●	9
Play With The Teletubbies	Knowledge Ad.	●●	36
Pocket Fighter	Capcom	●●●●	11
Point Blank	Namco	●●●◖	6
Point Blank 2	Namco	●●●◖	20
Point Blank 3	Namco	●●●◖	44
Polaris SnoCross	Vatical	●●◖	38
Pong	Hasbro Int.	●●●◖	27
Pool Hustler	Activision	●●●●	15
Populous: The Beginning	Electronic Arts	●◖	21
Porsche Challenge	Sony CEA	●●●◖	1
Power Rangers Lightspeed Rescue	THQ	●◖	40
Power Soccer 2	Psygnosis	●●●	5
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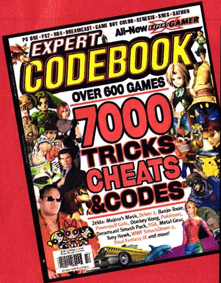
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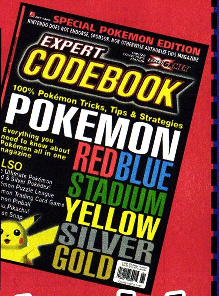
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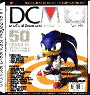
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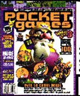
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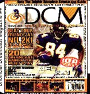
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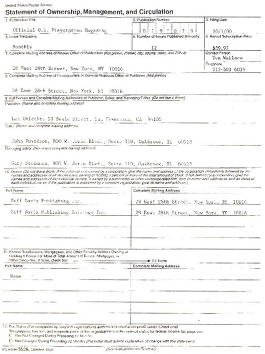
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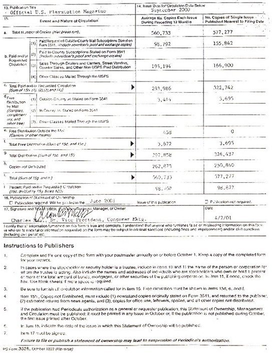

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PS Form 3526, October 1999 *(Reverse)*

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John Andretti's Spare Car
Hold R1, press: Square, Triangle, Square, Triangle

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Hold L2 and press: Square, circle, X, Dow3n, Up, Right, Left

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Hold R2 and press: Square, Circle, X, Up, Down, Left, Right

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Treasure Island Track
Hold L2 and press: Square, Circle Square, Up, Up, Down, Up, Left, Right, X

Proving Grounds Track
Hold R1 and press: Left, Circle, Up, Down, Right, Right, Right

STAR WARS STARFIGHTER

Chances of The Force actually showing up if you're having trouble beating a Starfighter mission: 0%. That's why we've dissected the toughest levels so you don't have to start talking in Yoda-speak to calm yourself. Next month we'll spoil the party with a long look at the best Starfighter unlockables.

MISSION 2

ROYAL ESCORT

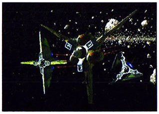
Mission 2 is a little harder than the first, but not by much. Your job is to escort the Queen's ship through an asteroid field and protect it from incoming fighters.

Objective 1 - Protect the Royal Starship
The first group of fighters to come after the Queen will be a group of Merc Daggers. After this, Morningstar fighters will appear. These fighters are a little more maneuverable and have a little better shielding than the Daggers, so watch out. Once you take out the Morningstars, the hardest fighters so far come into play—the Dianogas. You'll also be warned that you are close to the asteroids. You will have to watch yourself as you dogfight and chase the enemies—asteroids can take quite a bit of your shields away in one hit. If you are going after a gold medal, the best advice is to take out the Daggers with your missiles, then take out the Morningstars quickly with boost and the zoom. Use remaining missiles on the Dianogas or boost, zoom and laser them down.

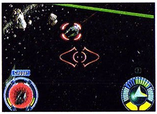
Bonus Objective 1 - Royal Starship Takes No Hull Damage
This is not an easy task. Remember, the objective is to keep the Queen's ship from taking hull damage. It can take quite a few hits on its shields before the fighters give it actual damage. Even so, it will take a lot of boosting and marksman zoom-shooting to take out the fighters before they get close to the Queen's ship.

Bonus Objective 2 - Destroy all Merc Daggers in under one minute
This is perhaps one of the easiest medals to get in the game. There are about seven Daggers and they have low shielding. If you want to save missiles, take the first five with missiles and boost to destroy the last two.

Bonus Objective 3 - Rhys destroys all Merc Dianogas
If you followed my advice with Objective 2 and saved half of your missiles, defeating the Dianogas will be as easy as the Daggers.



When you make your warp in, enemies will welcome you.



Daggers are not difficult. They take two or three hits at most.

Morningstars are more powerful than Daggers, but not by much.

007 Racing

New Car in Two-Player Mode: On the title screen, where "Press Start" is flashing, quickly press L1, R1, Triangle, Circle, X. You will hear an evil laugh when this is entered correctly. From the main menu, choose Two-Player mode and your type of game. On the car select screen, scroll left or right until you see the Aston Martin Vantage. You may now use this car in the two-player mode!

Big Air

All Courses: On the main menu screen, quickly press Right, Left, Right, Left, Circle, Square, Circle, Square. Select any Freeride Mode to get the new courses.

Race Against Mike Beallo: From the main menu, quickly press Square, Square, Square, Square, Square, Square, Circle, Circle. Next, finish first at the first track in World Tour Mode to race against him in the next race.

Race Against Shaun Palmer: From the main menu, quickly press Square, Square, Square, Square, Square, Square, Square, Square. Next, finish first at the first track in World Tour Mode to race against him in the next race.

Race Against Ian Spiro: From the main menu, quickly press Square, Square, Square, Square, Square, Square, Circle, Square. Next, finish first at the first track in World Tour Mode to race against him in the next race.

Race Against Nicola Thost: From the main menu, quickly press Square, Square, Square, Square, Square, Square, Square, Circle. Next, finish first at the first track in World Tour Mode to race against him in the next race.

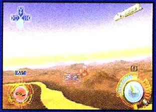
Race Against Ross Powers: From the main menu, quickly press Square, Square, Square, Square, Square, Circle, Square, Square. Next, finish first at the first track in World Tour Mode to race against him in the

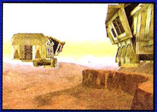
MISSION 6
VALUABLE GOODS

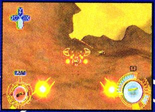
This is one mission where ordering your wingmen around will really help. You need to take out the big ships before they drop tanks, and to get a gold you will also have to take out the Recovery Freighter.

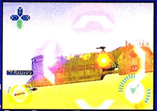
Objective 1 - Protect Pirate Freighter during loading
You simply will not believe the crap going on in this level. There are dozens of tanks, Scarab fighters and a couple dropships ready to drop even more tanks in the area.
It is imperative you destroy the dropships before they release their tanks or the mission will be over. Your wingmen will help if you ask them to. The tanks are set up all along the mouth of the river. You will need to take out almost all of them as well as a few fighters to protect the freighter while it's loading.

Objective 2 - Escort Pirate Freighter
Once the freighter is loaded, it needs your support to get where it's going. More fighters fly in, of course, and there are still many tanks. Eventually the freighter will get away, but be sure to take out anything close to its pre-determined path.


The number of AAT tanks on this level is almost overwhelming.


The reason for the difficulty: dropships. Take them out quickly.


Take out the tanks from a distance. Use the zoom.


Take out the Federation Recovery vehicle to win yourself a gold!

Bonus Objective 1- Destroy dropships before tanks are launched
There are three dropships. The first two are in front of you. Call on your wingmen for help to take these out. If they drop tanks, the mission is very hard. You'll be warned when the third dropship shows up. Hit Triangle to find it and call on your buddies for help.

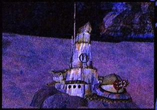
Bonus Objective 2- All Speeder Bikes Must Survive
The speeder bikes are small white vehicles grouped around the Pirate Freighter. To protect them, you have to take out the tanks. The Scarabs are concerned with ships in the air and taking strafing runs at the freighter while it's loading and trying to escape.

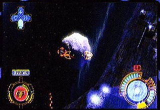
Bonus Objective 3- Destroy Recovery Freighter
You'll be warned about the Recovery Freighter's approach. Target the ship and ask your wingmen for help.

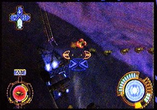
MISSION 7
EYE OF THE STORM

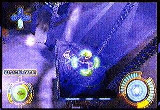
This is easily the hardest level so far. Four dropships and a ton of tanks, bombers and Scarabs are ready to make your new job a living hell. Have fun!

Objectives 1 & 2 - Protect Evac Transports during loading - Protect Inferno Turret
Your base is settled in the middle of a crater. It seems like a defensible position. It isn't. Tanks from all sides can just roll right in, and bombers are on their way (not to mention a few dozen Scarabs). The best way to protect your base and the transports is to immediately go after the two dropships that are heading right for you. Call in your wingmen, because you don't have a lot of time. Next, focus on Scarabs until the first wave of bombers roll in. These need to be taken out immediately; they have heavy-duty firepower and can take out a base in no time. Around the time the second wave of bombers shows up, two more dropships come into view. These, too, need to be taken out immediately. Don't let them land and drop their tanks—if they do, it will simply be too much to handle. After the dropships are taken out, keep shooting down any bombers, tanks or Scarabs that have broken through to get to the base.


The most important thing to protect on this level is your big gun.


Scarabs will do strafing runs to try to help destroy your base.


There are many tanks on their way to infiltrate your base.


Jenkins is hard to find, but to get a gold, you have to escort him.

Bonus Objective 1- Destroy dropships before tanks are launched
You need to take out the dropships to finish the level anyway. Just read the main objectives to find out how to take them out right when they appear.

Bonus Objective 2- All Decoy Freighters Must Survive
The best way to protect the decoy freighters is to stay near the base. The only time you need to stray is when you have to take out the third and fourth dropships. Every other enemy comes to you—be sure to take them out before they get too close to where the freighters landed.

Bonus Objective 3- Escort Jenkins to his Freefall
Jenkins is outside the base, so press Triangle until you find him. Next, take him to his Freefall near the freighters. He can't die if you want a gold medal.

next race.

Race Against Fabien Rohrer: From the Main Menu, quickly press Square, Square, Square, Square, Square, Circle, Square, Circle. Next, finish first at the first track in World Tour Mode to race against him in the next race.

TD5 board: From the main menu, quickly press Right, Left, Right, Left, Square, Square, Circle, Square. Then choose the pitbull at the board selection screen.

Accolade Board: From the main menu, quickly press Right, Left, Right, Left, Square, Circle, Circle, Square. Then choose the pitbull at the board selection screen.

Steve's Board: From the main menu, quickly press Right, Left, Right, Left, Square, Square, Circle, Circle. Then choose the pitbull at the board selection screen.

Daniel's Board: From the main menu, quickly press Right, Left, Right, Left, Circle, Square, Square, Circle. Then choose the pitbull at the board selection screen.

Jimmy's Board: From the main menu, quickly press Right, Left, Right, Left, Square, Circle, Circle, Circle. Then choose the pitbull at the board selection screen.

John's Board: From the main menu, quickly press Right, Left, Right, Left, Circle, Square, Square, Square. Then choose the pitbull at the board selection screen.

Big Air Board: From the main menu, quickly press Right, Left, Right, Left, Square, Square, Square, Circle. Then choose the pitbull at the board selection screen.

Fire Board: From the main menu, quickly press Right, Left, Right, Left, Square, Circle, Square, Square. Then choose the pitbull at the board selection screen.

Angel Board: From the Main Menu, quickly press Right, Left, Right, Left, Square, Circle, Square, Circle. Then choose the pitbull at the board selection screen.

Colin McRae Rally

Open All Tracks: From the main menu screen, choose Championship Mode, then choose "Continue." When asked to enter your name, put in the following password: OPENROADS and then move to OK and press X. You will hear a voice say, "Trick mode enabled." Once you hear this, go back to the main menu screen and choose "Rally." When you go to choose your track (country), you will see that you can now choose the Super-Special stage in Greece.

Dragon Ball GT

These tricks only work in the Two-player and Training Modes.

Wire Frame: Have both players decide on the characters they want. To choose them, hold SELECT and

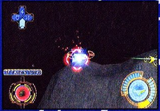
(cont. on page 110)

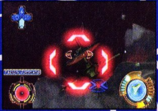
STAR WARS STARFIGHTER

MISSION 9
THE CRIPPLING BLOW

With Mission 9, the action keeps getting tougher. You are responsible for the destruction of an entire base. There are five main objectives to destroy, as well as many turrets and droids.

Objectives 1 through 5 - Destroy Landing Pad, Manufacturing Building, Power Station, Main Factory and Command Center
The base you are attacking is situated inside a crater. The best way to start is to seek out and destroy all the turrets and droid dispensers that your targeting can give to you. The turrets will be the bane of your existence in this confined area. Each target you have to destroy has at least two turrets guarding it, and some actually have droid troops. As with other levels, it is easiest to destroy the turrets from behind by hitting the blue light with your lasers. The Command Center is the hub of the entire base. Two super bombs will be enough to destroy it. Luckily, you have one of the best ships for this mission, because your bombs will regenerate—it almost makes the level too easy. Use the zoom to take out the turrets before you are in range of them and take advantage of having unlimited bombs when you're taking out the objectives.


Take out turrets by hitting the blue light behind them.


To get a gold, hold Circle down for a super-bomb. Two will do it.

Bonus Objective 1 - Destroy Command Center in under one minute
Two super bombs will take out this monster of a Command Center and give you a gold.

Bonus Objective 2 - Destroy Planetary Gun
Destroying the Planetary Gun is tricky. Once the command center is gone, take out all forms of resistance, especially the turrets. When you have destroyed a few objectives, you'll be closer to the inside of the base, and you will be able to reach the Gun with ease. The Planetary Gun is guarded by turrets, though, so be careful.

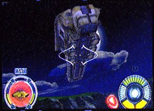
Bonus Objective 3 - Complete mission in under eight minutes
Completing the mission in under eight minutes is difficult since it takes time for your missiles to regenerate. Don't waste time on turrets—if you blow up the objectives, the turrets will go with.

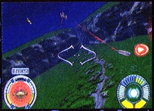
MISSION 11
MIDNIGHT MUNITIONS RUN

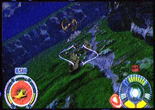
Objective 1 - Escort Reti to Resistance Base
This escort service does NOT stop until you reach the resistance base. Also, Reti will ask you to stay close because he can't see anything. Don't listen to him. Scout ahead and destroy any threat before Reti gets there. If you leave even one enemy, you are endangering both your and Reti's chances for survival. In this mission, the fighters target you and your escort equally.

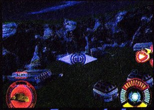
Objective 2 - Rescue N-1 Resistance Escorts
Once you reach the third of four clearings, your wingmen will advise you of a group of AMTs. You have to take these out quickly—a couple hits and Reti as well as the N-1 Resistance Escorts will bite it. There are four AMTs on the ground and several Scarab fighters in the air.

Objective 3 - Defend Resistance Base
Next, your base is being overrun. Now you have to destroy all the tanks and incoming droid troops so Reti can land.


As with many other levels, the dropships are key—destroy them.


You'll be attacked by waves of Scarabs in the clearing.


Your friend needs support—don't let him get too far ahead.


After your escort job is finished, hightail it back home.

Bonus Objective 1 - Destroy all AMTs
If you want the safest trip for your escort, you will destroy the AMTs anyway. They all show up on your targeting computer.

Bonus Objective 2 - Destroy all dropships
This is actually more difficult than you might think. Each dropship has already left enemies and are basically just hovering in the air. They will offer no resistance. The same cannot be said for the multitude of ground troops, though. There is one dropship in the first clearing, one in the next and one in the third. The last dropship is a little hard to spot, so keep hitting Triangle until you get it on your scopes.

Bonus Objective 3 - Complete Mission in under seven minutes
Other than destroying the dropships, completing all the objectives in the seven minutes is fairly easy.

(cont. from page 109)

then press X. When you go into the battle, both characters will be wireframed!

Alternative Outfits: Have both players decide on the characters they want. To choose them, press Square+X+Circle simultaneously. You will begin your battle with new clothes.

Duke Nukem: Land of the Babes

From the main menu screen, access the Options. Move down and access Cheats. On the screen are locked versions of most of the codes.

Level Select: Circle, X, Square, Square, X, Square, Circle.
Invincibility: L1, Square, Circle, Circle, Square, L1, L2.
All Weapons: R2, X, L1, Square, R1, Circle, L2.
Infinite Ammunition: L2, Circle, R2, Square, Circle, L2, R1.
Double Damage: Square, Square, Square, Circle, Circle, Circle, X.
Temporary Invincibility: L1, L1, L1, L1, L1, L1, R2.
Invisibility: Square, X, Circle, Square, X, Circle, Square.
Full Ego: R1, R1, Circle, Circle, L1, L1, R2.
Full Armor: L1, L1, R1, R1, X, X, Circle, Circle.
First-Person View: L2, R1, L1, R2, Circle, X, Square.
Big Head Duke: Square, Square, X, Circle, Circle, X, Square.
Small Head Duke: Square, X, Circle, Circle, X, Square, Square.
Big Head Enemies: X, X, R1, X, L1, X.
Small Head Enemies: X, L1, X, R1, X, X.
Wacky FMV Sequences: L1, L2, R1, R2, Circle, Circle, Square, Square.
Outtake FMV Sequences: L1, L2, R1, R2, Square, Square, Circle, Circle.
Ending FMV Sequence: Circle, R2, L1, Square, L2, X, R2.
Unlock Every Cheat: L1, L2, R2, R1, L1, L2, R2, R1, L1, L2, R2, R1, L1, L2, R2, R1, Circle, Circle, Circle, Circle, X, X, X, X, Square, Square, Square, Square, SELECT, SELECT, SELECT, SELECT.

Fear Effect

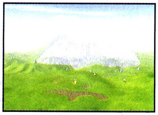
Press START on the title screen, then go to the "Options" screen. From there, access the "Credits" option. On the "Credits" screen, enter any of the codes shown below. You will see the screen flash and hear a gunshot if entered correctly.

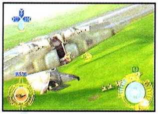
999 Ammunition: L1, Triangle, Up,

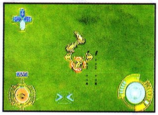
MISSION 13
LAST STAND ON NABOO

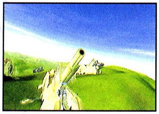
After a couple escort missions, it's time for an all-out war. Two Trade Federation heavy transports (which you can't destroy, so quit trying) land and launch waves of enemies.

Objective 1 - Protect Resistance Turrets
This level is going to take some time. You have one job, and it isn't even close to easy. As opposed to targeting heavy dropships (except for two that your wingmen can help you with), you will be required to take out several dozen tanks and a few bombers and Staps. You have to destroy as many as you can as fast as you can. You will be warned when a dropship is in the area, and, as with all other times one appears, you must drop everything and take them out before they land and add another 50 tanks to the battle. There are about 20 bombers that will come in different waves as well, and you will be warned most times when they are approaching. This level is a lot like Missile Command. The enemy just keeps on coming, and the best thing to do is to take them out closest to your base and make your way back. If, by some miracle, you find yourself ahead of the game, go for the mouth of the large transports to take out the land vehicles.


Your base is heavily defended, but the assault force is huge.


Many of the tanks will come from these large transports.


Drop bombs from a high altitude to avoid a quick death.


HAG vehicles are very strong and should be your main concern.

Bonus Objective 1 - All Resistance Turrets must survive
This is almost a joke. Somewhere around this circular base, an enemy tank is bound to take out a turret. There are so many tanks that the only way to survive is if you are VERY fast in destroying your targets.

Bonus Objective 2 - Destroy all Scarab Fighters
Thank you for an easy one. As you well know by now, Scarabs can take about two hits, so this is pretty easy—except for the fact that you have much more deadly enemies to watch out for.

Bonus Objective 3 - Complete mission in under 12 minutes
This, too, is a bit of a joke. The enemies drop in time for you to destroy them and make the 12-minute deadline, but only if you target, destroy and move on very quickly.

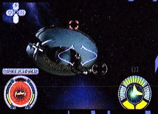
MISSION 14
THE FINAL ASSAULT

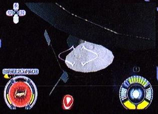
You're going up against the same type of ship Anakin and his boys defeated in Phantom Menace. Unfortunately, you won't be able to just fly in and "whoops" it to death like boy Vader. You'll have to make it look realistic and actually use some skill.

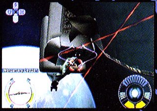
Objective 1 - Destroy all receiver Stations
With all the fighters flying around, this can be tough. Once you find a receiver station, though, keep boosting in a full circle around the circular ship, destroying them as you go around. Once those are destroyed, there are two more on the top-middle of the ship, and four more in the area with the strange pillars.

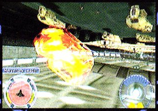
Objective 2 - Destroy all Droid Starfighters
The Droid Starfighters hardly pose a challenge. At least not until the Merc Leader shows up—then you'll have your hands full with just him.

Objective 3 - Destroy Merc Leader
The Merc Leader is very, very difficult. The missiles he uses leave huge explosions, so fight him from a distance. Also, be sure not to lose him when he flies into the big Federation ship—he uses a network of tunnels you may not otherwise have noticed.


This is your target, the Federation's droid controller.


There are eight dishes on the outside and six in the middle.


The Merc Leader is easily the strongest small craft enemy.


Once inside, you're on your own. Watch for his exploding missiles.

Bonus Objective 1 - Destroy Receiver stations in under two minutes
The only way you'll really accomplish this is by knowing where the dishes are. It may take you a couple of tries.

Bonus Objective 2 - Destroy all Interior Ceiling Turrets
You'll want to destroy these turrets once you're in the ship anyway. If you ignore them, you'll miss out on a couple medals and you'll probably be killed.

Bonus Objective 3 - Destroy all Lander Assembly Cranes
There are four of these Lander Assembly Cranes that you have to destroy. Why would you have to destroy Lander Assembly equipment when you are trying to take down the whole ship? Yours is not to wonder why...at least they show up on the radar.

Down, Circle, Circle, Triangle, Square, Left, Triangle.
Unlimited Health: L1, Triangle, Up, Down, Circle, Circle, Triangle, Square, Right, Square.
One-Hit Kills with Firearms: L1, Triangle, Up. Down, Circle, Circle, Triangle, Square, Down, R1.
Suicide Mode (NPCs are stronger): Down, Down, Down, Triangle, Down, Down, Down, Square, Left, Right.

Final Fantasy Tactics
Get Cloud in Your Party: This trick starts in Chapter 4, which is fairly far into the game. In Machinery City you will find an ancient robot. Even though you can't activate the robot, it is important, so be sure to remember it. After getting the robot, go to the Royal Capital and enter the bar. Ask for some information; you should learn about the Saint Dragon and a hunter will ask to join your party. Recruit him and go to the Mining City. When you get there, help the Saint Dragon. You should be able to get the Aquarius Zodiac Stone there. Take the Stone back to Machinery City and use it on the robot. Once it becomes functional, leave. On your way out, you should find another machine. You can't do anything with it just yet, but make sure to hold onto it. Leave the city and head for Nerubes Temple. After fighting Worker No. 7, the Saint Dragon will transform into a young girl and you will get the Cancer Zodiac Stone. Head back to Machinery City. Use the Cancer Zodiac Stone to activate the ancient machine. It will bring Cloud back from the future and he will join you. Now find Aeris in one of the towns nearby and buy some flowers from her. She'll be attacked and Cloud will rush to the rescue. At the end of all this, Cloud will officially join your party.

Grand Theft Auto: Director's Cut
Ultimate Cheat: Go to the player selection screen and choose to rename your character with the Square button. Delete the current name and put in HAROLDHAND. Once you do, your picture will be changed into a parrot. Now you will get all levels, weapons, ammo, 9,999,990 points, no cops, armor, coordinates and 99 lives!

(cont. on page 112)

TACTICAL ESPIONAGE ACTION

METAL GEAR SOLID 2

SONS OF LIBERTY

DEMONSTRATION VERSION

Now that we have a demo in our hands the *OPM* staff won't have to talk about what body part we'd willingly trade for 10 minutes with MGS2. If you haven't played the demo, you should. Here's a list of all the new moves, how to do them and a way to whip through the demo in no time at all (but who'd want to do that?).

DEALING WITH BODIES

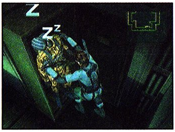
Unlike the situation in the first game, killing (or knocking out, in this case) a soldier isn't the end of the story. Just as in reality (not that we would know), if you kill someone, the body doesn't disappear on its own. This is a bad thing, because if you just leave the body there, other guards may find it and alert their buddies. Fortunately for Snake, there are several effective (and fun) ways to deal with dead or unconscious bodies.

TOSS 'EM OVERBOARD

If you're still on the outside deck of the boat, there's a pretty clean and easy way of getting rid of that pesky body; just throw it off the ship. However, you can only do this at one of the gates at each side of the deck. Drag the body to the gate and Snake'll do the rest.

STUFF 'EM IN A LOCKER

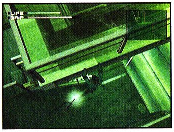
There are lockers conveniently located all over the ship. If you put a dead body in a locker, no one will ever find it. If you put an unconscious guard in a locker, he will eventually wake up, but no one will find him until then—by that time, you'll (hopefully) be long gone.



GUARD RADIOS

The guards may be smarter than before, but they have to play by much stricter rules. When you alert a guard (you know, the red exclamation point), it doesn't instantly trigger an onslaught of guards who come out of the woodwork. Instead, an alerted guard will usually try to knock you down or shoot you once to stun you, then he'll radio for assistance. If you manage to knock him out or kill him before he has a chance to use his radio, you'll be safe. You can even temporarily disable the radios of any guards in the area by setting off a chafe grenade.

HANGING



In MGS2, Snake can make much better use of his environment than he could before. One of his most prominent new moves is the ability to hang off a ledge. You can use this to hide from soldiers or to drop down to the area below. If you drop on top of a guard, you can actually knock him out. Don't miss, though, or you'll just alert the guard (and look like an idiot).

(cont. from page 111)

Hot Shots Golf 2

Incredible Code: From the title screen, choose New Game. When asked to choose your name, enter 2GSH and then press the O.K. button on the screen. Now all of the hidden characters will be unlocked, all difficulties, special clubs and balls will be available, prizes and more!

Jet Moto 2

Race as Enigma: Go into the options and set the "Difficulty" to Master and the "Laps" to 6. Go back to the screen and press Left, Square, Down, Triangle, Right, Circle, L1, R1 (this must be done quickly). Enigma will now be available from the select rider screen.

Knockout Kings 2000

Pulsating Heads: Go into Career Mode and create a new boxer. When asked to enter your name, put in THROB and then select your Gym. You will see the boxer's head shrink and grow repeatedly.

Unlock Mills Lane: Go into Exhibition and fight a match in any weight class. During the fight, you must be disqualified by giving your opponent a kick to the stomach three times. Do this by pressing Triangle+Square+Circle+X simultaneously. Once the match is called, you will be taken back to the "Exhibition" screen. Choose the Middleweight class and scroll over until you see Mills Lane with boxing gloves!

Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver

Refill Health: Hold L1 and press Down, Circle, Up, Left, Up, Left.

Next Level Health: Hold L1 and press Right, X, Left, Triangle, Up, Down.

Maximum Health: Hold L1 and press Right, Circle, Down, Up, Down, Up.

Refill Magic: Hold L1 and press Right, Right, Left, Triangle, Right, Down.

Maximum Magic: Hold L1 and press Triangle, Right, Down, Right, Up, Triangle, Left.

Pass Through Barriers: Hold L1 and press Down, Circle, Circle, Left, Right, Triangle, Up.

Wall Climbing: Hold L1 and press Triangle, Down, L2, Right, Up, Down.

Hurt Raziel: Hold L1 and press Left, Circle, Up, Up, Down.

Force: Hold L1 and press Left, Right, Circle, Left, Right, Left.

Constrict: Hold L1 and press Down, Up, Right, Right, Circle, Up, Up, Down.

USING THE GUN

Being able to unload your gun in first-person mode opens up a huge realm of possibilities. Now you can choose exactly where you want to shoot rather than just gunning down soldiers. Perhaps even more significant is the inclusion of a tranquilizer gun called an M9. It can be used to knock a guard unconscious without the risk of alerting him. Hitting a guard in the head with the M9 will instantly knock him out, and hitting him somewhere else on his body will cause unconsciousness soon enough. While a guard is unconscious, you're free to do whatever you please with him.

DISTRACTION

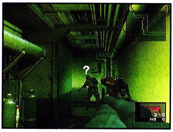
If you're aiming for a guard's head and miss, you will often end up hitting something (usually the wall) behind him. If the guard hears it, he will enter a sort of semi-alert state where he will investigate the source of the noise. This can be a good thing, however, as it will actually lead the guard away from you. Use this time while the guard is distracted and looking around to get in a nice clear shot at his head.

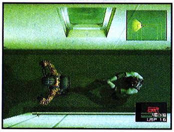
HOLD-UP/THREATEN

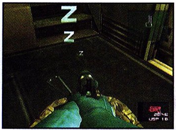
It's not easy to do, but if you sneak up behind a guard and aim your gun at him, you will hold him up. As long as you keep your gun on him, he won't move. This is fun, of course, but if you actually manage to get around in front of him (while still keeping the gun aimed at him), you can actually threaten the guard by pointing the gun at his head (or a certain other sensitive area) and cause him to drop an item.

EXECUTION

Knocking out a guard will buy you some time, but he will eventually wake up and radio for help. Unfortunately, once you're inside the ship, there's no way to toss a body overboard. Instead, you'll simply have to use the USP to do the job. If you shoot a guard in the leg or arm, he'll survive, so you must shoot him in the head. Don't have too much fun with it, though; that would be cruel.

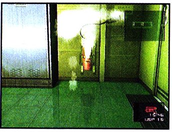






SHOOTING THE SURROUNDINGS

Even in this short demo, there are countless items and objects that you can shoot with either of Snake's guns. Some of these things serve no useful purpose to shoot, but occasionally you can make use of your environment to deal with those pesky guards.



EXTINGUISHER & PIPES

Scattered around the ship are fire extinguishers and steam pipes. Shooting either of these when a guard is nearby will stun the guards. Then you can give them the head shot you've been waiting for. Also of note, the chemical from the fire extinguisher will make laser beams visible. This technique, we'll say, will come in handy.

Force Glyph: Hold L1 and press Down, Left, Triangle, Down, Up.
Stone Glyph: Hold L1 and press Down, Circle, Up, Left, Down, Right, Right.
Sound Glyph: Hold L1 and press Right, Right, Down, Circle, Up, Up, Down.
Water Glyph: Hold L1 and press Down, Circle, Up, Down, Right.
Fire Glyph: Hold L1 and press Up, Up, Right, Up, Triangle, L2, Right.
Sunlight Glyph: Hold L1 and press Left, Circle, Left, Right, Right, Up, Up, Left.
Shift at Any Time: Hold L1 and press Up, Up, Down, Right, Right, Left, Circle, Right, Left, Down.

Medal of Honor Underground

From the main menu screen, choose the options. Access the "Passwords" screen and put in these codes for the results shown. Once these passwords are in, choose "Secret Codes" from the options screen to activate them. The codes will work in the levels you've already completed.

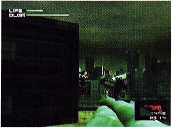
Invincibility: PUISSANCE
Quadruple Firing Rate: BALLESVITE
Bouncing Bullets: RICOCHET
Podoski Mode (One hit kills for enemies and you): LATIREUSE
Wacky Taxi (one minute to kill each enemy you come across): AUTODINGUO
Ultimate Cheat: First, put in ENTREZVOUS and press the Send key. Enter the "Password" screen again and put in

(cont. on page 114)

MGS2 ONLINE

FAST COMPLETION AND INTERNET RANKING

When you beat the demo, you'll receive a code to indicate how well you played. Go to www.kcej.com to input your score and see your overall ranking. You can play at any difficulty level to receive a ranking. Here's a way to beat the demo as fast as possible on Very Hard firing four shots and taking no damage.



First, skip all intro hooey, take control of Snake, and run along the shadow on the deck toward the left. Run around the landing and pass the guard. Head into the door to the right.

Next, run down the hall to the right, and pass the sliding doors. Keep running. You'll come up behind a guard.

Flip him over and continue running until you pass through a door.

Skip the cinema. Run into the hall on the left. Run by the guard on the stairs and take the door on the right.

Run up through the hall and roll right as you hit the cinema about the guard's shadow. Skip the cinema. Run up and flip the guard, then keep running to the left until you reach the next staircase.

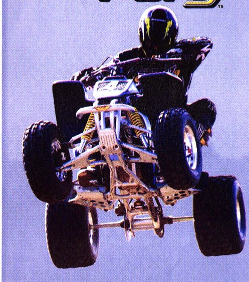
Skip the cinema. Run underneath the camera and head up the stairs.

Run into the room on the left, then go straight, around the view of the camera, and head through the door on the right. Run up the stairs to reach the deck.

FIGHTING OLGA

Skip all cinemas on the deck and run to the door on the left. You'll be in the fight with Olga. Use your M9 and aim for her head. If you hit her in the head, you will do 25-percent damage. It's important to stop her shots by shooting first. If you're fast enough, she'll never even shoot the tarp.

ATV Offroad Fury



Choosing a Ride

Once you choose an ATV for the Pro-Career, you're stuck with it unless you want to start another career. Here are the four performance categories, why they're important, and how they'll affect your ride.

Traction: If you stray away from it, you can boost your Tire Friction while in the ATV Garage. Too much Traction also inhibits your power-sliding, and no sensible rider wants that.

Acceleration: This is key, particularly for the hillier tracks. It's perfect for Cross Country Enduro.

Top Speed: We're fans of having high Top Speed, but Acceleration wins our vote as most important stat. Go with a mix, but have higher Acceleration.

Stability: This is the most important consideration for beginners. The higher this is, the harder it is for you to be thrown off your mule—but the more you adjust to the game, the less you'll need it.

CPU Shade

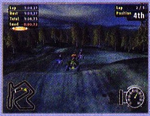
When the heat is on and you've got two more turns to make, there's nothing more frustrating than feeling a tire tread atop your helmet, wiping you out and landing you in fifth place. Know that the CPU dominates all one-on-one situations. If you're going side by side with the CPU and you try to use a little muscle, you'll discover you don't have any. The best thing to do is stay out of the CPU's way when on the ground (if you're airborne, try landing on top of the CPU riders to take them out). If you're desperate, brush a CPU rider when turning a corner so it smacks into a box an obstacle.

Unlockables

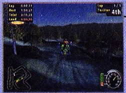
You work your butt off in this game to take home the grand prize. You struggle through bone-breaking crashes, neck-twisting spills and enough bumps to leave your thumb in shambles. The shame of it is that you only get two things for beating both the MAXXIS Nationals and the Stadium Supercross. The first thing is a totally revved-up bike that is chock-full of the four stat categories (Traction, Top Speed, Acceleration and Stability), and the second is an ugly new outfit. Whoopee.

Salem's Backlot

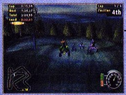
Salem's Backlot has as much mystery and darkness as the Stephen King novel with a similar name. The best description for this track is "tricky". You'll encounter the chance for huge air, but if you take it every time, you're going to be launched into oblivion. Self-control and memorizing the hot spots will earn you a nice finish.



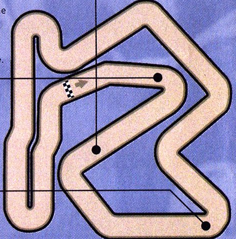
This first turn after the start can be a nightmare if your speed is too high. Make sure you slow down. One strategy is to get a lot of lift and drop on top of your opponent, but it is a risky maneuver.



The second major turn is much like the first—too much speed over the hill and you'll get murdered. Slow down and go to the inside.



Much of this track is made or lost in the first three turns. For the third, follow the advice of the other two. Slow down. Be careful. God speed.



Bike Tweaks

You want to tear up the dark, devilish Salem's Backlot. Concentrate on powersliding, so lower your Tire Friction. Tighten your Shocks so you'll have little bounce on the tricky terrain. As far as Top Speed and Acceleration go, balance is the best for this level.

(cont. from page 113)

PORTECLEFS as your code and press Send. Everything will now be opened on the "Secret Codes" screen.

Cartoon Sketch Pictures: MOHDESSINS

Dreamworks Pictures: DWIECRANS

Team Pictures: MOHUEQUIPE

Midnight Club

Unlock Smuggler's Run Buggy:

If you happen to have the game, "Smuggler's Run," you can open up a hidden vehicle in Midnight Club! Just save a game from Smuggler's Run on a memory card. Now, with this saved game in your system, go to the vehicle selection screen in Midnight Club. Keep scrolling through the cars and you will eventually see the Baja Buggy as a selectable vehicle!

Oni

In the middle of the game, press the SELECT button. Move down and highlight the "Help" option. Now press L2, L1, L2, Square, Circle, Square. This is the first part of the codes shown below. After entering this part first, put in the rest of the codes as shown below for these results.

(Note: The L3 and R3 commands are performed by pressing in the left analog stick for L3 and pressing in the right analog stick for R3)

Mini Me: L3, R3, Square, Circle.

Huge Heads: START, Square, Circle, START.

Ready 2 Rumble Boxing: Round 2

From the main menu, choose Arcade Mode. Pick a One Player or Two Player game and on the boxer selection screen, enter any of these codes for the results as shown. You will hear a bell if the trick was entered correctly. (Note: Player One may enter one of the codes and then choose a character. Then Player Two may enter a different code and then choose a character).

Huge Gloves: Left, Right, Up, Down, R1, R2.

Zombie Boxer: Left, Up, Right, Down, R1, R1, R2.

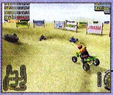
Fat Boxer: Right, Right, Up, Down, Right, R1, R1, R2.

Skinny Boxer: Right, Right, Up, Down, Right, R1, R2.

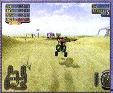
Play as Freak E. Deke and Michael Jackson: R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, R2, R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, R1, R2.

Yucatan Dunes

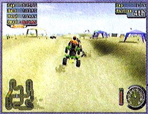
Yucatan Dunes may be the most frustrating race you'll encounter. A track this difficult would've been better suited near the end, but no matter. The key is to keep a solid speed and to keep your wits about you. You will not win if you don't take some chances. At all. If you don't take risks, you're going to shatter a controller.



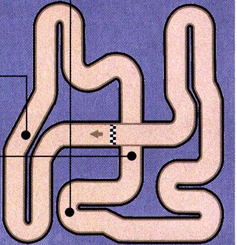
This is one tricky turn because of the dip. Decrease speed, then hit the gas once you're into the turn.



This is a jump you'll make mistakes on. Get used to slowing down and leaving the Analog alone. Trust us.



Ignoring the importance of this first stretch is easy, but don't make that mistake. Keep your Analog jumps low so you don't end up trampolining through it.

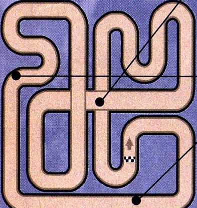


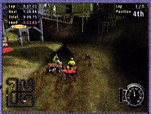
Bike Tweaks

This is one tricky course. It challenges you by demanding high Top Speed, great Acceleration and accurate jumping. The trick is to lean your meter toward Top Speed. Also, deaden your tires by bringing down the Shocks. Finally, don't use really big jumps. The smaller the better here.

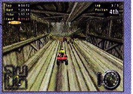
Manitoba Mills

Feel like racing an intimidating raceway? Well, here it is. Just remember to not get too competition happy, because Manitoba, more than any other track on the circuit, will waste away many of the CPU riders. By hanging near the front, you're likely to end up winning.

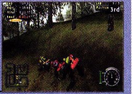




"The Dip" as we refer to it, is a great way to waste away CPU riders. They'll take this aggressively. The trick: Cut to the inside and force them wide so they can take a spill.



On this bridge, be ready to make a move when you exit. Pull back and snap the Analog to gain lots of time.



In the song Dead Man's Curve that guy should've slowed down, and so should you.

Bike Tweaks

Don't take a breath before you decrease your Tire Friction. If you don't powerslide effectively on this course, you can forget about winning. Also, there are a lot of teeny-tiny hills, so tighten up your Shocks. Acceleration wins out over Top Speed, here, too.

Christmas Arena and Costume: Start up your system without the disc inside, then access the "System Configuration" option. Choose "Clock Adjustment" and set the date to 12/25/2000. After adjusting the date, insert the game and begin. Choose Arcade mode and highlight "Selene Strike" on the boxer selection screen. The words, "Holiday Outfit" will appear underneath her name.

Unlock All Boxers: From the main menu, choose Arcade Mode. Then select one or two players. On the boxer select screen, press Left, Left, Right, R2, Left, Right, Right, R1, R1, R2. You will hear a bell when entered correctly. Now you can choose from a variety of new boxers, including Bill and Hillary Clinton!

Resident Evil 2: Dual Shock

Play as Chris Redfield and Ada: To play as two new characters, beat Scenario B with either Leon or Claire (your old RE2 saved games work). This will open up the Extreme Battle Mode. Then you have to beat Extreme Battle on Level 1, which will let you play as Ada. After you get her, a Level 2 difficulty will become available. Complete Level 2 with any of the three available characters (Leon, Claire or Ada), and you'll get to play as Chris Redfield!

Ridge Racer 5

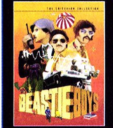
Opening Cinema Effects: During the opening cinema, you can give three different effects to the graphics. Pressing R1 once will give you black and white graphics, pressing R1 again will give you yellowish graphics and pressing R1 a third time

(cont. on page 116)

DVD EASTER EGGS

Bedazzled DVD

The movie might not be great, but it has its moments. Here's one more: Press Right on th second page of Special Features. A small image of the breathtaking Ms. Hurley will appear standing devilishly on her own shoulder. Press Play and you'll see a rather lengthy deleted scene where Brendan Fraser is a rock star. Very cool.



Beastie Boys DVD Video Anthology

Want more B-Boys making noise? Here's how: Go to the main menu, then to the "Schematic Overview" section. Press Right five times. Then press Down to select the color bars box. You'll get a sweet audio track featuring video director Spike Jonze, who is, apparently, the man.

Blair Witch 2: Book of Shadows DVD

If you paid close attention to the Blair Witch Runes that appear in the movie, chances are you'll want to learn a bit more. You'll have to find them and click on them in the DVD menus. Here's where to locate them:

* Thurisaz "th": Audio Features Menu. Press right from Priority Records to highlight the rune. Select it to find out some info.

* Perthro: Go Right on the Scene Index menu.

* Dagaz: Go to Scene Index 1-4. Align the cursor on "1" and press left.

* Eihwaz: Cast Menu. Align cursor on Special Features, then press Up and select the rune.

* Isa: Go to the DVD ROM Materials section and press Up to read about the death rune.

* Laguz: Production Notes. Go to the third page in this section, then align the cursor on Special Features and press Up.

Pee Wee's Big Adventure DVD

Who can resist seeing this flick? Here's a great egg. The packaging doesn't suggest that there are deleted scenes, but there are. Also, there is a visual-effects documentary. To get to it go to the Special Features Menu and voilá!

Bring It On DVD

Hop on over to the Language section of the main menu and scroll down to the bottom. Once there, highlight Menu then click Right. That's when a horn, a cheering horn, if you will will highlight. It opens up a short spot where the director will come onto the screen, congratulate you for your egg-finding, then tell you that you won't be seeing any hot cheerleaders. A bittersweet Easter egg.

Dr. Strangelove: Special-Edition DVD

When you get to the main menu of this classic Kubrick flick, press Down until you've highlighted the top of the globe. Then press OK. A television screen lowers and plays a montage of each time "Plan R" is mentioned in the flick. It's a short little clip, maybe only 15 seconds, but it's a nice touch.

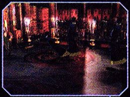
fear effect 2

RETRO HELIX

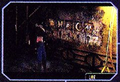
Here's part 2 of our FE2 strategy. Here's where the going gets tough.

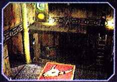
xian's tomb

① You can't kill the knife-wielding guys in this room (or any other place where you might find them, for that matter). Just run around them.

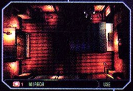


② Once you get coins from the ghost, you can access this puzzle. Any coins will show up as colored dots. The symbols in the puzzle correspond to symbols on the various doors in the level. There's only one door you can open at first. Select the Moon, then Sun symbols, then press the button at the bottom of the puzzle. Quickly run to the door in the previous room at the top of the ladder. Once inside the room, avoid the guard and get the Terra Cotta Key.

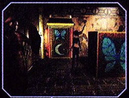




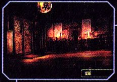
③ You won't sleep well with that dead guy hanging there. After the first night's sleep at the inn, talk to the innkeeper, then go to your room. Use the mirror at the bed.

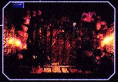


④ Once you have the Butterfly coin, you can open the next door. Select the Butterfly, then Moon symbols, then hurry to the door in the previous room.



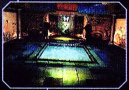
⑤





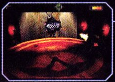
Once you're inside the Astronomy Room, lower the shade over the open window and raise the shade over the closed window to cause night to fall. Go back outside and follow the ghost to the well. Search the well to get the Remains. Go back and switch the shades again to cause day to break. Go back outside and show the Remains to the parents. As soon as the cinema ends, be prepared to immediately run down to a door (you'll appear with a guard right next to you).

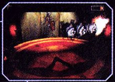
⑥



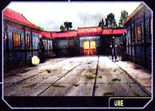
You have the Lily Coin, so use it to open another door at the symbol puzzle. Select Butterfly, Lily, Moon, then hurry to the room with the square pool in the middle. Ignore the enemies and go through the door.

⑦ Fight this boss in the classic shoot-and-dodge method. Aim toward the moving wall; when the target with the bull head comes up, fire away, then quickly roll to either side. The other two targets can't be hit, so you'll just need to dodge. The skeleton target shoots to the right, so when it comes up, roll to the left. The warrior target shoots to the left, so when it comes up, roll to the right.

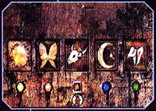




⑧ Use the Bandages that Glas gave you to blindfold the statues here.

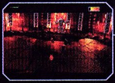


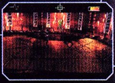
⑨



Now that you have the Bull coin, you can complete the final symbol puzzle. Select Bull, Sun, Moon, Butterfly, Lily.

⑩ This boss fight is another dodge-and-shoot job, although it's not as easy as the one before. Just keep running around the back of the room as far from Deke as possible. If an explosive gets too close, quickly roll out of the way. When you see Deke's human form show up, blast away. Keep this up until he goes down.





(cont. from page 115)

will give you blurred graphics. Use L1 to cycle the effects the opposite way.

Controller Sensitivity Display: In the middle of a race, press and hold the SELECT button until you see a graphic display. This display will show how hard you are turning your car, pressing the gas, and pressing the brake. If you want to get rid of the display, just press the SELECT button.

Smuggler's Run

In the middle of the game, press START to pause. Now you may enter any of the button sequences below. You will hear a beep when these are entered correctly. Once you complete a mission or return to the menu, the trick(s) will no longer be active until you enter them again.

Speed Increase: R1, L1, L2, R2, Right, Right, Right. You can do this code up to three times to get even faster speeds.

Speed Decrease: R2, L2, L1, R1, Left, Left, Left. You can do this code up to three times to get even slower speeds.

Half Gravity: L1, R1, R1, L2, R2, R2. Your car will float after going over any jump.

Zero Gravity Traffic: R1, R2, R1, R2, Up, Up, Up. Bump into any "traffic vehicle" on the ground and it will float away into the distance.

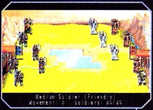
Invisible Off-Road Vehicles: R1, L1, L1, R2, L1, L1, L2. (Strangely enough, the cops will still know where you are.)

Spider-Man

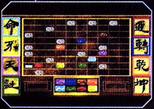
On the main menu screen, access the "Special" menu. Highlight and enter the "Cheats" option. Now put in any of these cheats (shown in caps.) on the "Enter Cheats" screen as shown.

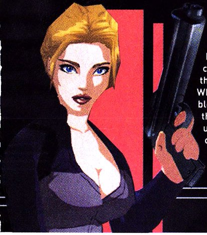
Level Select: XCLSIOR
Invulnerable: RUSTCRST
Webbing: STRUDL
Game Comic Covers: ALLSIXCC
Movie Viewer: WATCH EM
Character Viewer: CVIEW EM
Storyboard Viewer: CGOSSETT
What If Contest: GBHSRSPM
Ben Reilly Costume: BNREILLY
Symbiote Spidey Costume: BLKSPIDR
Spidey 2099 Costume: TWNTYNDN
Captain Universe Costume: S COSMIC
Spidey Unlimited Costume: PARALLEL
Scarlet Spider Costume: LETTER S
Amazing Bagman Costume: AMZBGMAN
Peter Parker Costume: MJS STUD
Quick Change Costume: ALMSTPKR
Unlock J. James Jewett: RULUR

⑪ This game is simple. When units occupy the same square, they battle. For example, if two small units (10 soldiers each) fight, they will both be wiped out. However, if a medium unit (20 soldiers) fights with a small unit, the small unit will be wiped out, but the medium unit will still have 10 soldiers left. Winning is easy. Use your medium units to attack the small units. Once you're down to fewer units, use small units to advance on the enemy flag. Because of the speed of the small unit, you can outrun the enemy's medium or large units. In the final match, you only have medium units. Advance them all toward the flag to lure enemy units out. When the enemy only has large units left, outrun them as normal.

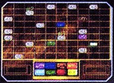


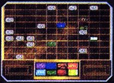
⑫ This puzzle is tricky, so make each move precisely. You have control of a white piece that starts above the bottom left corner of the screen. There are gray blocks and eight colored blocks on the board. The object is to move each colored block into the correct position at the bottom of the board. You cannot move a gray or colored block yourself; you can only push it with the piece you control. When you push a block, it will slide in the direction pushed until hitting a wall or another block.





Starting from the beginning of the puzzle, push the blocks in this order:





step #	color	block direction
01.	Light Blue	Left
02.	Green	Up
03.	Yellow	Right
04.	Red	Right
05.	Yellow	Down
06.	Green	Left
07.	Red	Down
08.	Orange	Right
09.	Orange	Down
10.	Light Blue	Down
11.	Gray #1	Left
12.	Gray #2	Down
13.	Purple	Left
14.	Purple	Down
15.	Gray #3	Left
16.	Brown	Down
17.	Brown	Left
18.	Brown	Down
19.	Green	Down
20.	Blue	Left
21.	Blue	Down

Full Health: DCSTUR
Big Heads: DULUX
Debug Info: LLADNEK
Everything: EEL NATS
No Naughty Words: Enter a "naughty" word for a cheat password and Spider-Man will appear next to the word and punch it, turning it into a "nice" word.

SSX

On the rider select screen, press Square to access the options. Next, press and hold L1+L2+R1+R2, then one of the following codes. You will hear a sound if the trick was entered correctly.

Unlock Everything: Down, Left, Up, Right, X, Circle, Triangle, Square. This will give you access to all riders, outfits, boards and courses in the game.)

All Attribute Points: Circle, Circle, Circle, Circle, Circle, X, Triangle, Square.

Crazy Runners: Square, Triangle, Circle, X, Square, Triangle, Circle, X. Your rider will have his board on his back and you will have to run the course on foot in order to win.

Unlimited Hints: Circle, X, Circle, X, Circle, X, Circle, X. On the "Loading" screen before the game starts, you will see all the hints appear one after another. Unfortunately, this doesn't stop and you will have to press the Reset button on your PS2 to get out of it.

Summoner

Comedy Role-Playing FMV: On the main menu screen, move down and access the "Credits" option. While the credits are scrolling, press X. You'll see a hilarious

(cont. on page 118)

SILENT SCOPE

Sniping cheats for the PS2 shooter

Expert Challenge
This removes guide arrows and aiming rings making it a much more difficult game. While selecting Game Mode, press and hold the trigger button. While you're holding the trigger, move your cursor to your mode of choice and press the Start four times. If entered correctly you'll hear a second gunshot.

Night Vision Challenge
If you want another big challenge, this code makes it night all the time. You'll have to rely on your Night Vision rifle scope to see the enemy. While selecting the Game Mode, hold the trigger button. While holding the trigger, move your cursor onto your mode of choice and press the Start five times. If entered correctly you'll hear a second gunshot.

Five-Second Exchange For Life
This will take five seconds of your time, but hand over an extra life. To get it, press Start during the game and enter: Triangle, X, Right, Left, Right, Left, Circle, X, Right, Left, Right, Left, Down, Down, Up, Up

Night Mode
To make the game turn to night, try this at the mode select screen: Up, Left, Down, Right, Up, Square, Triangle

No Crosshairs
Don't need crosshairs on your scope? We'll see about that. At the mode select screen enter: Right, Right, Right, Square

No Enemy Targeting
Make those little red arrows disappear. Here's how: At the mode select screen enter: Right, Right, Right, Right, Left, Down, Up, Right

No Scope Mode
Try this out and you'll have no scope, just a red circle. You won't even be able to zoom in. At the mode select screen enter: Right, Down, Right, Square, Right, Down, Right, Square

Romantic Mode
Your scope will take on a romantic, sultry air by looking like a heart and the screen will feature a pinkish tint. At the mode select screen enter: Left, Right, Right, Square, Triangle

Trade Life For 5 Seconds
Try this on for size if you're in dire straits. It'll trade half of your life away, but you'll be graced with five more seconds of gameplay. Mid-game hit the Start button to pause. Then enter: Up, Up, Down, Down, Left, Right, Left, Right, X, Circle

Ultra Fast Mode
Way too fast. At the mode select screen enter: Down, Triangle, Up, Square, Triangle, Down, Right, Down, Right, Square, Triangle.

SPYRO 2: YEAR OF THE DRAGON

Mutating the dragon hero and more

He may be cute in purple, but there are plenty of different skins that Spyro can put on, plus other alterations. Plug in these codes to get the following results.

2D Spyro
To turn Spyro into a flat little dragon pause the game and enter: Left, Right, Left, Right, L1, R1, L1, R1, Square, Circle

Big-Headed Dragon
To enlarge Spyro's skull you can pause the game and enter: Up, R1, Up, R1, Up, R1, Circle, Circle, Circle, Circle

Make Spyro Black
To make Spyro black, pause the game and press: Up, Left, Down, Right, Up, Square, R1, R2, L1, L2, Up, Right, Down, Left, Up, Down. Spyro will be black.

Make Spyro Blue
To make Spyro blue pause the game and press: Up, Left, Down, Right, Up, Square, R1, R2, L1, L2, Up, Right, Down, Left, Up, and X.

Make Spyro Green
To make Spyro green, pause the game and type: Up, Left, Down, Right, Up, Square, R1, R2, L1, L2, Up, Right, Down, Left, Up, Triangle, and Spyro will be green.

Make Spyro Pink
To make Spyro pink, pause the game and press: Up, Left, Down, Right, Up, Square, R1, R2, L1, L2, Up, Right, Down, Left, Up, Square. Spyro should be pink.

Make Spyro Red
Pause the game and press:
Up, Left, Down, Right, Up, Square, R1, R2, L1, L2, Up, Right, Down, Left, Up, and Circle.

Make Spyro Yellow
To make Spyro yellow, pause the game and press: Up, Left, Down, Right, Up, Square, R1, R2, L1, L2, Up, Right, Down, Left, Up, Up. Spyro will be yellow.

Sparx Treasure Hunt
Pause the game and enter: Right, Right, Left, Left, Right, Right, Left, Left, Circle, Circle, Circle

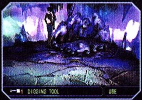
Crash Bash Demo
At the Press Start Screen press and hold:
L1 + R2 + Square.
You will be taken directly to the Crash Bash Demo.

Saving Lives
If you find yourself hopelessly falling to a grisly death, hit pause and exit the level. You'll have saved a life, though you'll have to start again.

the gardens

The object of this puzzle is to get three Elemental Crystals and a Diamond to complete the level. If you stand on top of an element tile in one area and press the Use button, it transports you to the garden of that element in the alternate world. If you activate the tile of the same element as the garden you are in, it will transport you to that tile in the normal world. There are a lot of small puzzles in this one, so for the fastest method to completing the level, just follow these directions.

① In Fire garden (alternate): Get the Empty Gourd near the back of the garden.

② 

In Stone garden (alternate): Use the Digging Tool on the dirt area in the corner to acquire the Rock Salt.

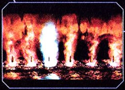
③ In Water garden (alternate): Use the Rock Salt on the grinder to acquire the Salt. Use the Salt at the water to defeat the dragon and get the Water Crystal (this will also change the Digging Tool into the Broken Digging Tool). Use the Empty Gourd on the water to acquire the Salt Water Gourd.

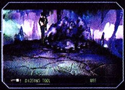
④ In Gold garden (alternate): Use the Salt Water Gourd at the molten gold. Watch the pattern (the middle counts as a square, too) and cross to the back-left to acquire the Gold Crystal and the Empty Gourd.

⑤ In Water garden (normal): Use the water wheel to purify the water in Water garden (alternate).

⑥ In Water garden (alternate): Fill the Empty Goblet and Empty Gourd at the water.

⑦ In Fire garden (alternate): Use the Fresh Water Goblet on the gray tile in the middle of the garden. When you do, one of the fire streams behind you will light up. Carefully walk through the stream that lit up and grab the Fire Crystal then carefully walk out. Next, go to the furnace at the back of the garden (where you first found the Empty Gourd). Use both the Empty Goblet and the Broken Digging Tool on the furnace to fix the Digging Tool.





⑧ In Earth garden (alternate): Use the Digging Tool on the dirt area where you first got the Rock Salt, then use each of the three Elemental Crystals followed by the Fresh Water Gourd to get the Diamond.

⑨ In Garden Gazebo: Use the Diamond in the door at the far end to complete the level.

(cont. from page 117)
outtake of the characters from Summoner engaging in a role-playing game.

Swing Away Golf

Unlock All Golfers: On the main menu screen (with Story Mode, Normal Mode, Create Course and Options), press L2, R2, L2, R2, Up, Right, Down, Left, L1, R1. You will hear a sound if the code was entered correctly. Now go into either Story Mode or Normal Mode. Three more golfers (Sam, Meg and Steven) will now be available.

Tekken Tag Tournament

Begin with Tag Partner: If you want to start your match with your second player, just hold the Tag button on the loading screen until the match begins.

New Armor King Costume: Beat Arcade mode with Armor King, then at the character select screen, highlight Armor King and press START.

Tekken Bowl: Use Ogre to unlock True Ogre. (While bowling, you can see Dr. Boskonovitch jumping in the background. Aim to the left where he is, and if you get it just right, you will be able to K.O. him with the bowling ball!)

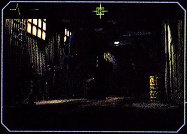
Jukebox: Get a score of 200 or more in Tekken Bowl. The jukebox will allow you to choose the background music that plays as you bowl.

Theme Park: Roller Coaster

These tricks are entered while playing the game. You will hear a sound when they are entered correctly (make sure you don't pause before entering them).

glas' past

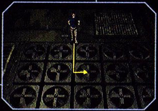
①



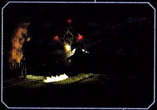
Once the mech comes busting in, use the Assault Rifle and send a spray of bullets toward the explosive barrels in the corner.

②

Carefully walk between the fans until you are next to the fan in the middle. Just as it is slowing to a stop, walk onto it and quickly press the Use button to jump down.



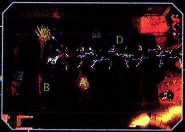
③



Once the helicopter destroys your mech, you'll be on the rooftop with the chopper still in pursuit. Quickly run to the gun turret above you to shoot the huey down.

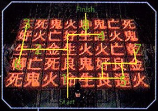
④

From the save point, move as close to the electricity edge as possible, then wait. When you see the whole area fill with electricity, wait for it to stop, then quickly run to point A and wait. You'll reach it just as the electricity starts again. When it switches positions, quickly run to point B and wait. Once the electricity turns off, quickly run to point C and wait. When the electricity stops, quickly run to point D and wait right on the red line. The electricity will first come on right in front of you. The instant it switches, run forward to the door. Equip the EMP and fire it before you use the Gate Key to open the door.



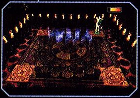
the immortals' tower

①



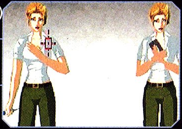
You must walk onto each of eight symbols in the correct order to solve this puzzle. If you walk onto one of the bad symbols, you will take damage. Start on the gray symbols at the bottom and then very carefully walk on each tile in order.

②



To defeat this boss, you must equip your Melee weapon. Wait for the boss to pull out his sword, then get right next to him and kick away. You won't always hit, but if you're close to him, his lighting attacks will usually miss.

③



Here you can choose the good or bad ending. If you shoot the "Rain" on the left (actually Mist), you will get the good ending. If you shoot the Rain on the right, you will get the bad ending.

④

If you picked the bad ending, this boss fight is pretty simple. Equip the rocket launcher and just fire rockets with each character until the boss is defeated. You'll switch characters midway through, but just keep attacking.

If you picked the good ending, you'll also want to use the rocket launcher. If the boss starts shooting out streams of fire, try to get as far away as possible, but keep firing off rockets. Once the boss is dead, quickly move near the dead body and use the DNA Virus.

DNA VIRUS
USE

255 Golden Tickets: Up, Down, Left, Right, Circle, Right, Left, Down, Up, Circle (Press this button combination a total of four times to make it work).
Free Purchases: Left, Down, X, Circle. (Press this button combination a total of eight times to make it work).

Triple Play 2001

Triple Play Dream Team: From the main menu screen, choose Big League Challenge. When you get to the player select screen, hold L1+R1+Up simultaneously. Keep holding these until you hear the announcer say, "Triple Play Baseball." Now you'll be able to play as this team in Big League Challenge mode.

Unreal Tournament

Invincibility: In the middle of the game, press START to pause. Then press Square, Circle, Left, Right, Circle, Square.
Level Skip: In the middle of the game, press START to pause. Then press Up, Down, Left, Right, Right, Left, Circle.
999 Ammo: In the middle of the game, press START to pause. Then press Left, Right, Circle, Circle, Circle, Right, Left.
Level Select: In the middle of a match, pause and choose to exit the game. Go to the main menu and choose to resume the game. Highlight the name of the saved game (character) you want, and press Up, Down, Down, Up, Left, Up, Right, Down. You will hear a sound. The "Select Ladder" screen will appear. Now you will see that all the matches are completed in each category, which makes them available to play.
Stealth Mutator: From the main menu, press Square, Square, Circle, Circle, Square, Square, Circle, Circle. You will hear a sound. Choose Multiplayer and on the "Select Game" screen, choose Mutators. Move down the list until you see Stealth as an option. Choose this mutator to have all players equipped with cloaking devices.
Fatboy Mutator: From the main menu, press Circle, Circle, Circle, Up, Down, Down, Up, Circle, Circle, Circle. You will hear a sound. Choose Multiplayer and on the "Select Game" screen, choose Mutators. Move down the list until you see Fatboy as an option. Choose this mutator to fatten up your character as he/she gets frags.

NEXT MONTH

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Editorial content subject to change

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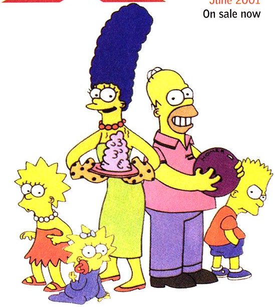
Activision is about to set off an extreme-sports explosion, with Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3 lighting the fuse. *EGM*'s got the exclusive scoop on Neversoft's next skate masterpiece, as well as the first screens of Tony Hawk on Xbox. They even reveal every high-octane title in Activision's adrenalized new sports line. But that ain't all: Catch up with gaming's greatest pioneers, including Alexey Pajitnov and Pac-Man maker Moru Iwatani, and find out what they've been up to lately. This issue's packed!

EXPERT GAMER

June 2001
On sale now



With excellent PS2 games finally starting to come in, it's no surprise that *XG*'s lead strategy next month will be Konami's Zone of the Enders. Get all the info on Z.O.E. and more in *XG*'s next issue. Also in the June issue:

- **Minigame strategies for Mario Party 3**
- **Quake III for PS2**
- **Slammin' tactics for Simpsons Wrestling**

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WHAT'S THAT MEAN?

Ever wonder the meaning behind those foreign game titles? We've got your answers

Yeah, Onimusha was a great game. But what's with that name? It's obviously Japanese, but at no point in the game are we silly English-speaking Americans ever informed as to what the title actually means. For all we know, Capcom just strung a bunch of letters together.

Being the curious people that we are here at *OPM*, we decided to do a little research on the subject. And why stop there? Why not check out the meanings of several other funny-worded game titles we've always wondered about? So we did. Here's what we found.

THIS ONE MEANS "VIRTUA BREAD RIDER 3."
YOU KNOW, I LOVED THE FIRST TWO.
exec anger.cfg

illustration by Penny Arcade

Einhander

Origin: German

Meaning: Square's gorgeous 3D shooter features fighters that can pick up arm-like attachments from their foes and use them to blast away. So Einhander's English translation of "one-handed" makes sense...sort of. (Why German?)

Oni

Origin: Japanese

Meaning: Seeing as how this game was developed in America and also takes place in the good ol' U.S. of A, we don't really understand why Bungie gave it a Japanese moniker. Anyway, "oni" means "demons," supposedly representing the demons within held by the heroine Konoko.

Onimusha: Warlords

Origin: Japanese

Meaning: Now, here's a title that actually makes total sense! Take the "demon" meaning for "oni" again, then throw on a "knight" or "warrior" for "musha," and you get "Demon Knight/Warrior." Just like your enemies.

Star Wars: Super Bombad Racing

Origin: Gungan

Meaning: "Bombad" is a slang term from Jar Jar Binks' aquatic race, meaning "cool" or "grand." Or, more appropriately in terms of this game, it can also describe something that's "not good," "damaged" or "crippled."

Suikoden

Origin: Japanese/Chinese

Meaning: "Suikoden" is actually the Japanese translation of *Shuihu Zhuan* ("The Water Mark" in English), one of China's most well-known and cherished folk tales. The story details the adventures of 108 revolutionaries who crusade against their corrupt rulers—a plot that should sound very familiar to anyone who's played Konami's classic RPG.

Tekken

Origin: Japanese

Meaning: It takes an "iron fist" to do well in Namco's super-popular series of fighting games—which just so happens to be the translation of "tekken" into English.

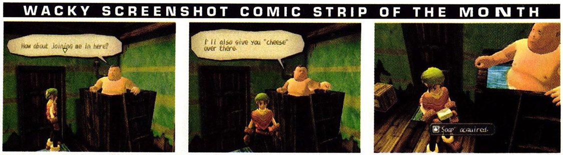
Tenchu

Origin: Japanese

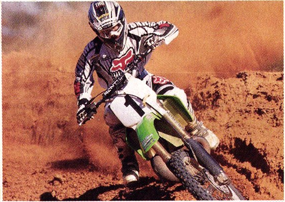
Meaning: Maybe your ninja intuition can help you understand how the word meaning either "heaven's punishment" or "pillars supporting heaven" bears any possible connection to Tenchu's plot and/or gameplay. 'Cause we sure can't.

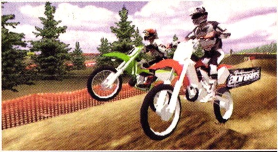
Of course, this list includes only a few of the many not-so-American titles out there. Are there any game titles you've always wondered about? Send them to us at opm@ziff-davis.com with the subject WHAT'S THAT MEAN?, and we'll do our best to answer your question.

WACKY SCREENSHOT COMIC STRIP OF THE MONTH

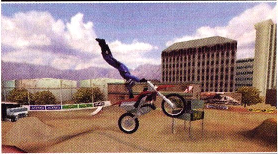

How about joining me in here?
I'll also give you "cheese" over there.
Soap acquired.

This strip comes to us by way of Dark Cloud. It speaks for itself.

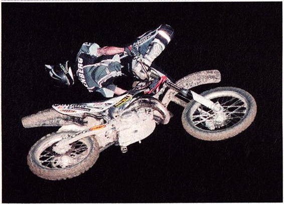


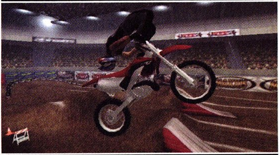


Real motocross racing with 20 pro riders on 15 MX and SX tracks

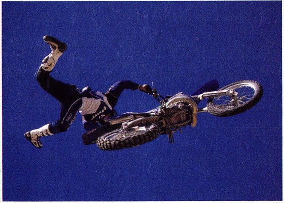


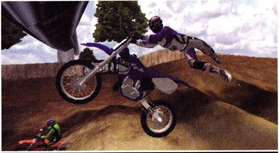
Pull insane tricks in arenas and wide open environments



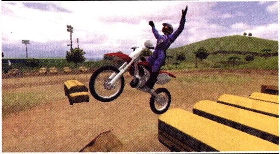


Backflips, frontflips, 360s ...need we say more?





Bust tons of tricks including Indian Airs, Supermans and signature moves



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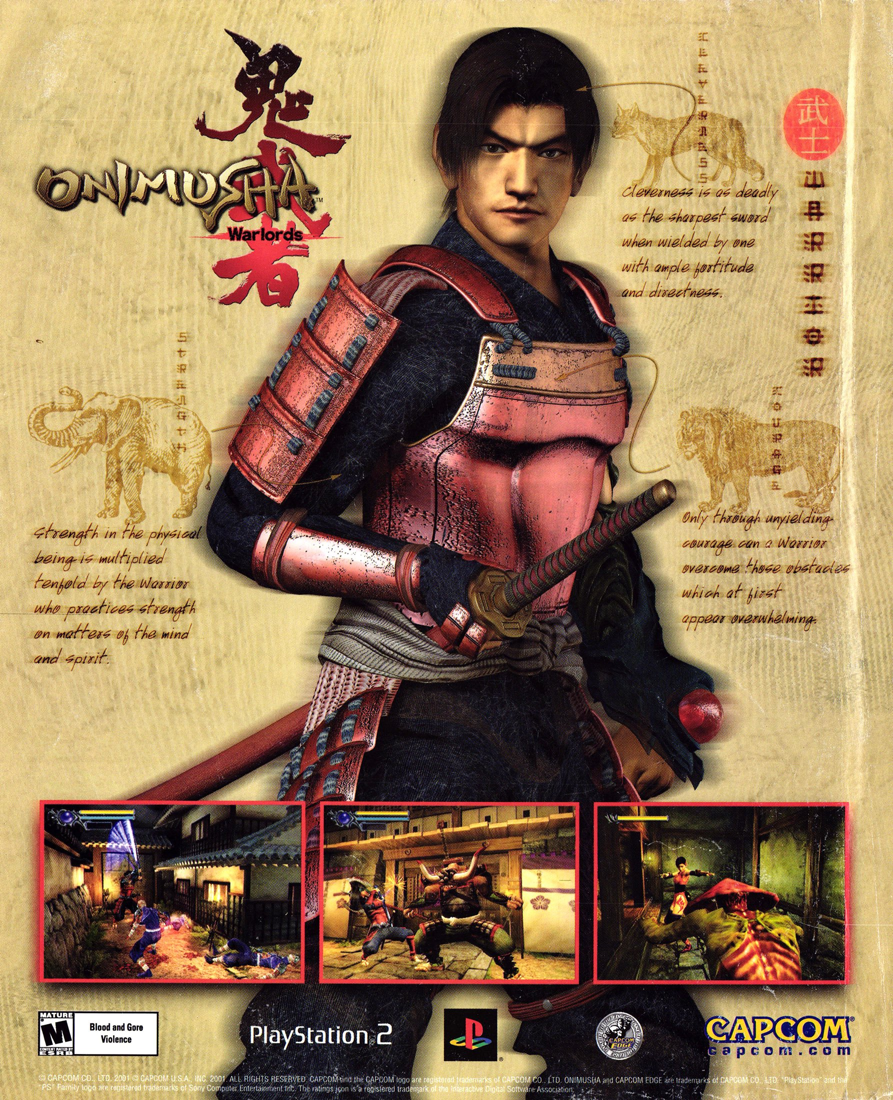
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COURAGE
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Only through unyielding courage can a Warrior overcome those obstacles which at first appear overwhelming.

Blood and Gore
Violence

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